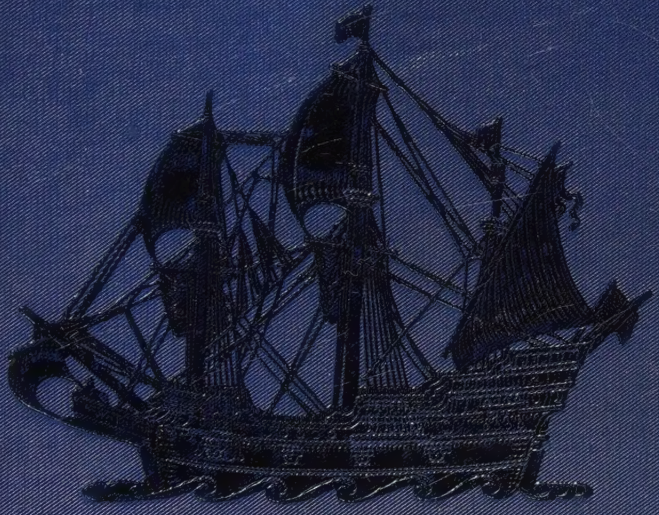
THE GOLDEN HIND



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THE GOLDEN HIND SERIES
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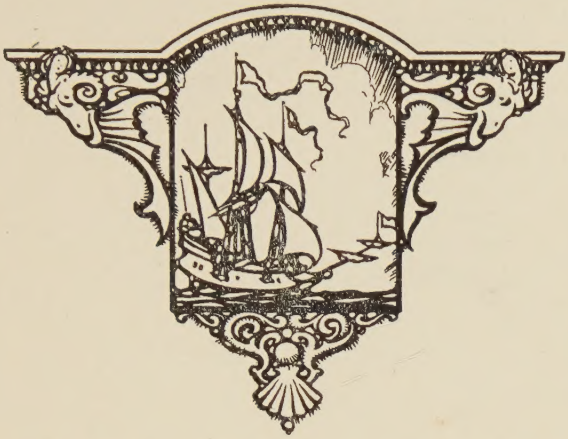

CAPTAIN SCOTT

THE GOLDEN HIND SERIES
Volumes published and in preparation

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CAPTAIN SCOTT
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R. F. Scott R.N.
Capt.

Captain Scott

By

STEPHEN GWYNN

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CAPTAIN SCOTT

CHAPTER I

PARENTAGE AND EARLY LIFE

IT is well to say at once why this book is written.

Nothing could be more superfluous than simply to tell again the story of Captain Scott's Antarctic explorations. The earlier part has been recounted by himself in *The Voyage of the "Discovery,"* with all the detail of which his handling was so masterly and so attractive. For the second adventure, tragic and glorious alike in its attainment and in its failure, we have his own journal, containing pages that are likely to be remembered so long as the English language continues to be spoken ; and there is a mass of supplementary matter from his comrades and helpers.

Technical discussion of the results of his two expeditions, or of the methods employed in them, is entirely beyond the competence or intention of the writer of these pages.

But the essential importance of Scott lies elsewhere than in what can be exactly recounted, or is amenable to criticism. His supreme achievement is that he touched the imagination of his country as no other man has done during the course of this century ; that he impressed on the public mind an example of heroic constancy exhibited in scenes where he was first only among his peers, yet always the directing mind and will. He showed to his countrymen all the stages of an epic adventure, on which he and his comrades risked and lost their

lives ; that was much to have accomplished ; but he did more. He made his countrymen see these facts with his eyes, and judge them with his vision. He imposed upon the public his own standard of values—yet not as his own, but as the standard by which England should measure the worth of action.

The English people were never prone, as some other peoples have been, to glorify the defeated. They have, in truth, never needed to do so. In Scott's case, defeat in a certain sense was patent ; yet his failure, in so far as there was failure, only set the final seal on his fame. He taught the world how little in comparison with other values success matters ; he made England feel that heroic deeds were none the less heroic because the heroes brought back no spoils of victory. With his dying message he challenged whatever was finest in the English temper, and he had his response. After that tragic story came leaping along the wires through depths of ocean, scarcely a year went by before the world was plunged in a welter of events without example in previous history ; deeds of heroism were daily needed and daily ventured ; a multitude of cares, hopes, fears, a host of unspeakable sorrows, swept over England ; yet the impression that Scott had fixed was never obliterated. His mark on the mind of England lasted through all.

How, then, is this to be accounted for ? That is the question which this book must try to answer.

It was not the deed which so moved mankind but the man. Amundsen by an amazing exploit reached the South Pole and came back in triumph. That news would at any time have interested humanity, and made the sensation of weeks or months. But Scott's arrival on that grim scene a month later gave to the episode a dramatic quality without precedent, which the tragic sequel heightened ; yet in that tragedy Scott and not Amundsen dominates. The victor slips away, having

vanquished not only the Antarctic barriers but his rival in the attempt ; it is left for Scott to make mankind feel and understand and see what the approach to that goal meant. Nothing that Amundsen has written or could have written makes us aware of his achievement as do the pages of Scott's journal, which tell how, having struggled through those solitudes where no sign of life existed, where no living thing had trodden, where the very air knew no passage of wings, they came on the trampled snow, the bamboo sticks planted, the flags, the written names and the message to be read at that ultimate tryst.

This means that Scott was not only a great explorer, but one of those rare men who can describe experience so vividly and vitally that it becomes available to all the world. He commanded a style that seemed colourless because it was so transparent a medium ; but he is never simply a narrator. He narrates with a purpose, to give instruction, for it is always part of his assumption that he stands in an order, doing his part, constructing a ladder by which his successors can mount to further heights of knowledge. But that is not all. His personality is too dominant for us to be left without guidance as to the conclusions which he wishes to enforce. The captain of a ship is charged with moral issues ; it is part of his duty to emphasize whatever goes to strengthen and advance the tradition of the service. Scott was a captain of the British Navy, detached from his professional duties to plan and conduct a National expedition. He was acting in the interests of science, but also he was clearly in his own mind undertaking and leading a feat of endurance and of hardihood. It was for him, acting on behalf of the nation, to carry the nation with him in his sense of what the national tradition exacted, and of the importance that these demands should be met without counting any cost. If he had

come home triumphant the lesson would have been enforced, but not with the same intensity as when the final sacrifice set a seal upon his faith and the faith of those who went with him to the end.

Both the expeditions which he conducted were undertaken and planned for the enlargement of knowledge ; but they were also supreme tests of civilized and disciplined manhood. England accepted Scott not only as an example of heroic endurance but as its interpreter. It seems therefore natural and proper that the English people should be told as much more as is possible about this leader and teacher of men.

In a few introductory pages prefixed to *Scott's Last Journey*, Sir James Barrie has given not only his personal impression of the man but some sketch of his boyhood. A good deal can now be added about another and most significant aspect of his life. Scott was first, last and all the time a British naval officer. The special tradition which he embodied and upheld was that of the British Navy. It was a religion with him. Letters of his which have been made available for this book give much of his thought about the service ; also, he describes in them with his habitual fullness the detail of day to day work, which is unfamiliar to the vast majority of us.

There is further and more intimate revelation of his character made in his letters to the lady whom he married, written before and after she became his wife.

Lastly, permission has now been given to supplement the published journal by extracts from the letters which he wrote from the Antarctic for her eye alone.

These are the new elements by which a reader can confirm and amplify the knowledge of Scott already given by his two books. They have here been inset into a narrative of Scott's life, in which the story of his two polar journeys has to be recalled again, but less with

the purpose of setting out the events than of bringing into relief Scott's personal part in them.

Before the narrative begins, however, one must go back a little. It is of interest to know from what forbears a man is descended—more especially when the ancestry is significant ; and Scott the explorer came of the same race as the most famous of all who bore that name. Yet anyone who knows even a little about Sir Walter Scott must know that Sir Walter would have counted his own celebrity a poor thing compared to that which was earned by this later offshoot of the same strong stock.

The Scotts were, before the union of the two kingdoms, landowners, cattle-breeders, and not infrequently cattle raiders, living in the Middle Marches of the Border, close to the Debateable Land, where neither English nor Scottish authority had sure jurisdiction. They were consequently in the thick of whatever fighting was going, and they acquired the name of the " Rough Clan "—being indeed, as Sir Walter in his *Tales of a Grandfather* says (somewhat impenitently), " termed by our historians the greatest robbers and fiercest fighters among the border clans."

By the eighteenth century, even the Border was tolerably settled ; but the Scotts " kept a wild trick of their ancestry," and when the Jacobite risings came, they were in that fighting also. Sir Walter tells us, in a fragment of autobiography, that he was made a Jacobite in his childhood by the stories told in his hearing of the cruelties exercised in the executions at Carlisle and in the Highlands after the battle of Culloden. " One or two of our own distant relations," he says, " had fallen on that occasion." It is possible that one of these may have been the great-great-grand-uncle of Robert Falcon Scott. It is certain at all events that Captain Scott's

great-great-grand-uncle was hanged upon this occasion —though it must be admitted that he suffered neither at Carlisle nor in the Highlands, but at York. Furthermore, the brother of this unlucky man would have shared the same fate, but that he escaped capture, and lived to be the father of a family.

His son was the explorer's great-grandfather.

These two brothers who turned out to follow Prince Charlie were the sons of a Scott, irregularly descended from the house of Buccleuch. Provision had been made for this illegitimate branch, and they used the Buccleuch arms and were accepted as members of the family by the heads of the whole Scott clan. In 1745 the father of the two rebels owned house and land at Haddington in East Lothian—close to the field of Prestonpans, where Prince Charlie won his victory. Before that fight, or after it, the Scotts' house was burnt—presumably because the sons were known to be in the rebel camp. Accordingly, while one brother went on with the victorious Jacobite advance into England, the elder was obliged to stay and fend for his own—the more so as his wife was far advanced in pregnancy. He and she wandered about, living as best they could, and their child was born in a fisherman's cottage at Leith, the port of Edinburgh. The times turned against them and, as soon as the mother was fit to travel, husband and wife and baby got a ship to France, where the husband and wife lived out the rest of their lives in exile. Their child, born at Leith in the troubles of 1745, returned to Great Britain as a middle-aged man and settled in Devonshire, at Holberton, where he set up a school and presently married. He had four sons and one daughter. Robert, his eldest son, was the explorer's grandfather.

If one wants a description of the gentry from whom these Jacobites came, it is worth while to turn back to Sir Walter ; for we find him sketching in a letter the

kind of people that his ancestors were, in the times before 1745. "Half starved lairds," he says, "who rode a lean horse and were followed by leaner greyhounds; gathered with difficulty a hundred pounds from a hundred tenants; fought duels—cocked their hats—and called themselves gentlemen." Their descendants, in quieter times, did not easily take to sedentary life. Sir Walter's own father was a Writer to the Signet, but he was the first of his name that ever followed an indoor occupation. Sir Walter himself, but for his lame foot, would have been a soldier as his brothers were. Briefly, the sons and grandsons of these Jacobite gentry flocked into the fighting services under Hanoverian kings. The Robert Scott who was born at Leith had not this chance, as he lived in France till he was thirty or older; but all four of his sons went into the Navy: Devonshire, no doubt, made them turn to the sea. Two died as midshipmen; the two elder of them changed over to a more paying branch of the service, and became pursers. The elder of these, Robert Scott, the explorer's grandfather, after twenty-one years' service, left the Navy in 1826 and settled down in a house called Outlands at Stoke Damerel, near Devonport, which he had bought in 1819. It remained the family home till 1894; and here Robert Falcon Scott, the explorer, was born.

Robert Scott, the grandfather, had five sons who grew up. The eldest was a surgeon in the Navy, the three next all served in the Indian army—one of them, General Edward Lushington Scott, with much distinction. The fifth son, John Edward Scott, born in 1830, was the only civilian among them. Being a delicate boy, he was privately educated, and brought up to take a hand in working the Hoegate Street Brewery at Plymouth, which his father and uncle (the two retired pursers) had jointly purchased in 1824. It was part of the family arrange-

ment that this home-keeping son should inherit Outlands.

In 1862 John Edward Scott married Miss Hannah Canning, and she came to live with him in the house of his parents.

There lived also at Outlands a surprising old lady, Miss Charlotte Scott—daughter of the Robert Scott who was born just after Prestonpans. She was ninety-six when she died in 1890, and she had a deal of ancient history to tell her grand-nephews and grand-nieces—of whom there were plenty. It was part of her story that as a child she had sat on Sir Walter's knee. He was frequently in London, and no doubt Scotts of all degree of kinship made pilgrimage to see him—and there was always welcome for his kindred.

John Edward Scott had six children, four of whom were girls. Robert Falcon Scott was the third child and the elder son. Both brothers followed the family tradition and went for fighting men. Robert Falcon Scott took the navy for his profession ; his brother Archibald, two years younger, went into the army.

The future explorer, born on June 6th, 1868, was taught by a governess at home till he was eight, then sent to a day school at Stoke Damerel, and later to Stubbington House at Fareham. From there he passed into the navy and became a cadet on the " Britannia."

The ordinary English public school and university education has been much praised, not only by English but by foreign authorities ; yet it has one defect. It prolongs boyishness. The undergraduate who has been a schoolboy till he was nineteen very often keeps the mentality of a schoolboy till he is one-and-twenty. The training of a naval cadet has very different results. It turns a boy into a useful and agreeable young man by the time he is fifteen. A midshipman has already learnt that work is not a thing to be dodged, but to be done

ROBERT FALCON SCOTT AS A NAVAL CADET
IN H.M.S. BRITANNIA

strenuously, so long as the worker is on duty. He has learnt that an order is an order and must be carried out—for he himself is in the position of giving orders. Later, when Scott at the age of twenty-six had to face a serious crisis in the fortunes of his family and therefore in his own, he had already ten years' experience of responsibility. Not many Englishmen who have been at the university, not many who have entered the army, could say as much for themselves. The navy, which is in many ways the most remarkable of all British public services, sets its mark very deep, precisely because it takes its men so young. It moulded Scott, it compressed and hardened the fibre of his nature. In truth it helped him to make himself ; for his was one of the cases in which mind, and even body, are formed by a deliberate and continuous direction of will.

Even physically he began as a rather delicate boy ; he ended by having the power to drag a loaded sledge faster and farther than almost any of his picked companions ; and yet he was neither big nor massive. Nerve force had to do the work of brawn. But it is more remarkable to note that he was originally inclined to indolence—a disposition inherited from his father—and, by the same inheritance, prone to violent bursts of temper. He became one of the hardest and swiftest brain workers ; and his temper was absolutely under control. These changes do not happen by miracle. As Sir James Barrie says in his Introduction to the popular edition of the *Last Journey*, " The faults of youth must have lived on in him as in all of us, but he got to know they were there and he took an iron grip of them, and never let go his hold."—To the very end, when we can look into his mind, we find him constantly at watch on himself ; for ever keeping self up to the mark—never content to let himself rest or slacken.

A man who has to make such efforts realizes more

than another the value of discipline. The navy no doubt helped him in the effort that he made : it provided an armature for what he had to build up. The process applied to many small defects ; but it was felt also in ways more important. There were elements in him which the navy had to repress. He was a dreamer by nature, and always remained liable to long fits of abstraction ; but, under the conditions of service, there was no room for the dreamer. Ultimately no doubt the dreamer decided the shape of his career ; for, once he had experienced the free range of adventure, he could not content himself with the routine of naval life in peace time. But throughout his adventure, the naval training asserted itself ; on the very limits of space, beyond all trodden tracks, it was at every point the naval officer who took charge and sent the dreamer " below." All the details of his preparation, too, were worked out with the technical minuteness which his training had inculcated.

There is very little to be told about his early life. The large family of four sisters and two brothers lived in the comfortable home near Devonport, with every appearance of prosperity. Mr. Scott, the father, sold the brewery and devoted himself entirely to gardening—and did his utmost to see that his children had a good time. They were all great allies, and the sisters, being older than the boys, asserted themselves to a full share in companionship.

Robert Falcon Scott, whom his family always knew as Con, became a naval cadet on the " Britannia " on July 15, 1881, aged thirteen. Two years later, on August 14, 1883, he went to the " Boadicea " as a midshipman ; served two years in her, three months in the " Monarch," and then was sent on November 10, 1886, to the " Rover," one of the four ships which made

up the training squadron. The commodore of the squadron was Sir Albert Hastings Markham (afterwards Admiral), the Arctic explorer. In 1887, his cousin Sir Clements Markham, the geographer and historian, came to stay on board as the commodore's guest, and, as Scott says, "made himself the personal friend of every midshipman in the four ships." Probably none of these young men knew—at all events, Scott did not—that the geographer was already on the look out for the man to lead an Antarctic expedition. Still less did they know that he had found him.

Sir Clements, who, as President of the Royal Geographical Society in 1893, launched the "Discovery" expedition, writes in his book, *The Lands of Silence* :

"I had selected the fittest commander in my own mind in 1887, when I was on board the 'Active' in the West Indies, the guest of my cousin Commodore Markham, then in command of the training squadron, the other ships being 'Rover,' 'Volage,' and 'Calypso.' When we were at St. Kitts, March 1st, 1887, the lieutenants got up a service cutter race. The boats were to be at anchor with awnings spread. They were to get under way and make sail, beat up to windward for a mile, round a buoy, down mast and sail, pull down to the starting point, anchor, and spread awning again. The race tried several qualities. For a long time it was a close thing between two midshipmen, Robert Falcon Scott and Hyde Parker. However, Scott won the race and on the 5th he dined with us. He was then eighteen and I was much struck by his intelligence, information, and the charm of his manner. My experience taught me that it would be years before an expedition would be ready, and I believed that Scott was the destined man to command it. At Vigo we were thrown together again, when my young friend was torpedo lieutenant of

the 'Empress of India,' and I was more than ever impressed by his evident vocation for such a command."

So began the acquaintance which decided the shape of Scott's career.

When he made his first impression on the mind of Sir Clements Markham, he was close on nineteen, and on the point of reaching the rank of sub-lieutenant. It happens sometimes that a young officer attains this distinction with a first class in all the five branches ; and such young men are always noted at the time—though not always afterwards. Scott did not attain to this academic completeness ; but he got four firsts out of the five. His two later certificates for the torpedo work on which he specialized were both first class. So far as examination tests could show, he was an officer of marked ability and industry.

We may get some pictures of other aspects of his character from a document which he chose to keep for record, when he was with the training squadron in the West Indies. It is headed :

EXTRACT from a private letter written by the Navigating Lieutenant of the "Scylla" describing the fortitude of Captain Maclachlan during a prolonged boat adventure.

NIL DESPERANDUM

Now just listen to a true story : the loss of the skipper and his marvellous recovery yesterday, after 48 hours in a water-logged boat without food or water for 56 hours, under a burning tropical sun, with a bald head and no hat on.

The Captain went away about 3 P.M. on Wednesday afternoon (18th March) by himself in his private skiff,

a Kingston water-wag, 14 feet long. He was last seen at 5.50 P.M. about 3 miles from the ship under sail. At 8.30 I went away and searched all along the coast for him until 11.30, when another relief party went away in the steam-boat until 3.30 A.M. Thursday morning (19th March), not a sign of wreckage or anything. At 9 A.M. (19th March) the ship put to sea and searched unavailingly until 11 P.M. Thursday night. Then returned here and, on learning some local details of the currents, their usual set and force, left again at midnight on a different course. The wind during the whole of Thursday was blowing half a gale with the seas running fresh, making it a practical impossibility to see anything for more than 50 yards away from the ship, still less a small grey 14 foot boat. Well, we continued our search the whole of yesterday (20th March). All hands had practically given up hope of ever seeing him again when, at 4.45 P.M. yesterday afternoon, he was sighted sitting in his water-logged dorry about 50 yards away. We picked him up in an exhausted condition, but still quite conscious, and he is doing as well as could be expected to-day. Of course, at present, no one is worrying for details, but he has told us a good deal without being asked. The whole of Thursday (19th March) seas were breaking clean over him, also the whole of Wednesday night, and for 36 hours he was spending all his energy and strength in clinging to the boat which kept turning over and over and over. Yesterday a shark made a grab at him and came right into the boat (always bear in mind that the boat was water-logged, and down to the gunwales, and the Captain up to his neck in water). The steam-boat searching for him on Wednesday night passed within a hundred yards of him three times, but as he was dead to leeward we could not hear him. He saw the ship quite close on Thursday night and again on Friday morning but we did not see him. It was the

merest fluke he was seen yesterday when we found him, as we were on our way back into harbour. We had actually passed him, he was abaft our beam when sighted and picked up—25 miles from land. He says all yesterday he had to defend himself against the attacks of myriads of birds with a torn up piece of bottom-board.

You should have heard the cheer from the ship's company when he was seen and when we got him on board. Altogether his salvation is entirely due to his dogged grit and perseverance and not giving up hope although passed quite close 6 times before being picked up. His first words on being dragged into the sea-boat were, " Well it does me good to fast sometimes ; I believe this has done me a world of good." He has insisted on dictating letters of apology to-day to shore folk for not turning up to dinner on Wednesday night, and for a dinner party he was giving on Thursday night not being able to come off, saying that " his little sailing trip in the Caribbean Sea had rather upset his calculations." He says he did not feel the loss of food or water at all, as he had too much to do driving away birds and sharks and sticking to the boat as these heavy seas were breaking over him.

Then follows the comment :

Isn't this a very remarkable adventure ! I know Mac, very well—he 's just the man for it—dogged, persistent, full of health and courage—with an *exceedingly* bald head.

A novelist would scarcely have dared to make the climax of rescue come and go five times without loss of reason.

Keep this. R. S.

At the close of 1888 Scott was posted to the " Amphion " then stationed at Esquimault in British Columbia. He

had to make his way to her, and Sir Courtauld Thomson wrote to Sir James Barrie an impression of him, as seen on the tramp steamer by which passengers were travelling from San Francisco to Alaska, because the railways were snowed up. The ship ran into a gale, and was so overcrowded that many women and children were allowed to sleep on the floor of the saloon. As everybody was sea-sick, the stewards could do nothing to serve meals, and there was a squalid chaos, till the sub-lieutenant of twenty took charge of the situation. He organized the men passengers—mostly a tough lot of Californian miners moving to a new mining camp—and formed them into squads to wash, dress, clean up, and feed and nurse the mothers and children ; and, in short, made them a disciplined crew under his orders.

About this time his younger brother, Archibald, passed into Woolwich and by 1890 had his commission in the Royal Artillery. The brothers were close comrades, having only two years between them ; but indeed the whole family of brothers and sisters were very good company for each other.

Con Scott returned in 1891 from Esquimault, overland across Canada, having become a full lieutenant. His sister remembers him as having greatly developed, both in muscle and mind, and altogether more awake and alert. He had begun to make himself. The work on which he had now to specialize was torpedo practice. In February, 1891, he wrote to his father that he had applied for leave to go into special training, and that Captain Brownlow of the " Amphion " had reported of him as " a young officer of good promise who has tact and patience in the handling of men. He is quiet and intelligent and I think likely to develop into a useful torpedo officer." The next three years were spent in the " Vernon," the Naval Torpedo School at Portsmouth. In the manœuvres of 1893, he commanded a torpedo

boat, and had his experience of taking charge in a gale, through which he brought his command from Milford Haven to Plymouth, and turned up at home wet and famished, having been on the bridge all the time with no chance of going below.

While his ship was in the Channel, he spent all the leave he could get at home. There was much tennis, which he played strenuously: he did everything for all he was worth, work or play. Then there was much pleasure-boat sailing up the rivers in a boat rigged with a big lugsail. If the soldier was at home, army and navy would have fierce discussions about the working of her, both being highly competent. Their mother, as well as the sisters, generally was of the party. But one thing was noticed ; if they were landing to lunch after some time on a choppy sea, Con Scott was eager to be first on shore ; he was never to the end of his life wholly free from sea-sickness.

In the autumn of 1893 he was transferred to the " Vulcan," the torpedo-school ship in the Mediterranean.

Through October there are most affectionate letters to him from his father, showing the closest following of the son's career. These recount also many small gaieties of home life, where all seemed to go merrily. But on December 12th Mr. Scott wrote, apologizing affectionately for a long silence. There had been trouble about money ; outstanding debts had been paid off and the house would be let furnished. He himself would look for employment. In short, the home was to be broken up.

But the father only mentioned this in passing, and much of his letter was devoted as usual to his son's relations with his superior officers, with inquiries as to the nature of his work, and as to some invention which he had made for the torpedo. It was the mother who on Christmas Eve told her son the full facts. Mr. Scott's

money for the sale of the brewery had been lost ; and, by the time debts were cleared off, the family had very little indeed to live on. Mr. Scott, however, hoped to get employment as manager of a brewery ; he did actually find such a post in Somerset at the close of 1895.

The sailor was now keenly engaged in the new branch of his work, perhaps the most modern development of naval science ; and in his own opinion he was in the best way to advance his interests by remaining torpedo lieutenant on the "Vulcan." Before the bad news came, he had written to his father on September 29th, 1894, a letter worth printing if only to show how keenly his mind was applied :

H.M.S. "Vulcan"
Phalarum Bay
September 29th.

My dear Father

. . . Briefly, my reasons for remaining in the ship are firstly that I look upon her as a latent success, as a splendid but undeveloped and misused experiment dependent on her present handling to establish her utility, a utility which in war time would be apparent and patent to all. For this reason I take a very great interest in her welfare and do as much as lays in my power to forward it. Secondly, and in consequence of my first reason, I have hopes of establishing a reputation for myself.

Thirdly, I am losing nothing ; in fact gaining a very great deal in general service experience—In general service work, of which we do as much as most other ships, I have a stake and take a position far above that which I should have in other ships—In addition I keep watch at sea with the fleet, and as they generally put us in the fighting line, am precisely in the same position to gain experience as if on board a battleship. To go

into more details on this point—we are getting very well known in the fleet ; no function takes place but what we come pretty well out of it, the athletic sports, the rifle meetings, the regattas, events which though very far away from you are very near to us out here ; fate has kept us before the public in all. But best of all we had a most triumphant inspection, the Admiral said publicly that he should report us as most creditable to all concerned, and privately that we were the cleanest ship he 'd inspected, an opinion fully endorsed by Levison and others who accompany him on these occasions, they adding that no ship could " touch us."

To fall back on the torpedo work again at which I have worked exceedingly hard, I look upon this ship as the best practical experience that could possibly befall an officer ; in fact I look upon myself now as an authority on the only modern way of working a minefield and such like exercises—but what is better, the Captain and Currey do likewise. The latter I look upon as one of the soundest officers I ever knew, the work he does is stupendous. . . . Therefore Currey's opinion of a Torpedo-man or other officer is one which I should always lay great store by.

But of course the Captain's is the opinion which will be most likely to affect one personally in the future.

I think there is little doubt that he will succeed Baldwin Walker and when he goes to the " Vernon," there will be *great* reforms.

Whether he will still remember me then, I can't predict ; we may have quarrelled before, for I am a poor diplomatist and we often differ in opinion ; but his reputation in the Torpedo world is very great.

Practically speaking, I shall as regards torpedo matters be probably very dependent on Durnford, so that fate resting on his good opinion and future employment is like all fates a very risky matter.

With regard to the proper work of this ship I have taken such steps as I could. This year has not been ill spent, for during it we have shaken down and generally got into working order. . . . And now we are in the position which the Captain described to the Admiral when he said, "I think now, sir, we are able to carry out any special exercise you can call upon us to perform." . . . Now I ask, am I wrong in stopping on? I think not, but rather show some wisdom. Only you must remember this, that the state of the ship etc. is not generally known at home—the appointment was not considered good in the "Vernon," but it was forgotten that there were possibilities of making what one would of it—at all events the position is beyond the criticism of any not in the know.

Even if I fail, the practical knowledge and experience gained will be invaluable. I am conscious that by self-advertisement I might make myself heard now, but the position is a delicate one, and I should be sorry to advocate anything in which I did not believe. Meanwhile things constantly annoy and irritate one—but as you see, I work for a larger than ordinary stake, and with this I will conclude adding, that the welfare of body if not of career remains good.

Your affect. son,

Robt. Scott.

But when the crash at home came, his own plans for his career were set aside, and he got a transfer as staff officer to the "Defiance," a torpedo depot ship at Devonport, where he was available for consultation. He was at first most reluctant to face the idea that his sisters should go out—as two of them did—to earn their own living. But, though he had lived on his pay in the navy, to accomplish this had always been a feat of economy. Comrades in the service remember that he not only

abstained from alcohol but refused to take part in any fun that had to be paid for—saying simply, that he had not the money ; no small trial for any young man, and he felt it, and never forgot the feeling—as will be seen. The younger brother found it impossible to remain in the Royal Artillery, where he had always received an allowance ; so he got himself seconded to service in Nigeria with a Hausa regiment, where expenses were small and pay good. Thus he was able to help materially, whereas the elder brother at first had no possible margin ; but he soon contributed what was in the circumstances a very large yearly sum.

Both these young men had all possible desire for the amusements of their age ; they were keen sportsmen—especially, both were such good horsemen that they constantly got mounts from people with horses to sell who wanted them shown off to advantage. But both had to deny themselves a very great deal.

Though, for a period, the younger son was able to contribute more, it was the elder who from the first trouble became the mainstay of the household. The pinch of this struggle finally disposed of the dreamer and installed the practical man. Yet even still the man that he came to be was only in the making. A trifle will tell a good deal. His sisters remember keenly the untidiness in which all his belongings were kept in youth, and how he " mooned round looking for them." If tie or collar was in the right drawer, it was so much the less likely to be found. Yet if we turn to Mr. Cherry Garrard's book, *The Worst Journey in the World*, this is what we read about sledging expeditions :

The routine of a tent makes a lot of difference. Scott's tent was a comfortable one to live in, and I was always glad when I was told to join it, and sorry to leave. He himself was extraordinarily quick, and no time was ever

lost by his party in camping or breaking camp. He was most careful, some said over-careful, but I do not think so, that everything should be neat and shipshape, and there was a recognized place for everything. On the Depot journey we were bidden to see that every particle of snow was beaten off our clothing and finnesko before entering the tent ; if it was drifting, we had to do this after entering and the snow was carefully cleared off the floorcloth. Afterwards each tent was supplied with a small brush with which to perform this office. In addition to other obvious material advantages, this materially helped to keep clothing, finnesko, and sleeping bags dry, and thus prolong the life of the furs. "After all is said and done," said Wilson one day after supper, " the best sledger is the man who sees what has to be done and does it—and says nothing about it." Scott agreed. And if you were " sledging with the Owner " you had to keep your eyes wide open for the little things which cropped up, and do them quickly, and say nothing about them.

That was the finished product, the man fully made, trained up to his final effort. Yet it is remembered that even after his return from the " Discovery " expedition, after those three years of strenuous leadership, the popular hero, as he was then, often showed fantastic absent-mindedness in the ordinary routine of life. Once at least, having set out for an evening party, he presented himself at the door, took off his overcoat, and displayed to the astonished footman a gentleman with white tie and white waistcoat perfectly adjusted, but lacking a dress coat.

This is anticipating. To get back to the early days, it should be said that the Scott family were not down-hearted in their calamity. In the summer of 1895,

letting Outlands, they moved to lodgings in a Devonshire farm, and the torpedo lieutenant was the life of the party when he could get home. There was much dressing up and other theatricals. He had always an uproarious delight in fun, and though his high spirits were not constant they were infectious.

At the end of 1895 they came back to Outlands, put it in readiness to be let permanently, and in autumn moved down to Somerset, where Mr. Scott had got the management of a brewery.

The sailor, having seen his family thus provided for, applied for a sea-going ship and was appointed to the "Empress of India" in August 1896: and in July 1897, after a few weeks in the "Jupiter," he went to the "Majestic," flagship of the Channel Fleet. His post in these ships was that of torpedo lieutenant. The "Majestic" was the flagship of the Vice-Admiral commanding the Channel squadron—Sir Henry Stephenson, K.C.B. Her Captain was H.S.H. Prince Louis of Battenberg, G.C.B.

During his absence the home life changed fast. In 1897 his eldest sister, now Lady Ellison-Macartney, married; later in the year Mr. Scott died. The widow, with the two daughters who were at home, moved up from Somerset to London; and in the early summer of 1898 the soldier son came home from Lagos, safe and sound.

It was a great joy for the elder brother in more ways than one. The two were close comrades; but they had much to consider together. Letters of this year from the sailor to his mother are full of encouragement about the fortunes of his sisters. The second, who had taken to nursing, was fairly launched; the other two were on the point of starting a business as dressmakers. Scott wrote:

My own dearest Mother

You cannot think how delightful it was to find you all in such good health and spirits. The prospect for the future seems brighter than it has been for years and above all things I rejoice to see that you are beginning to appreciate that by this honest hard work the girls are anything but sufferers. The difference in them since they have been about, meeting all manner of people and relying on themselves, is so very plain to me. Just the same sort of difference that Ettie felt and valued so much. They have gained in a hundred points, not to mention appearance and smartness.

I honestly think we shall some day be grateful to fortune for lifting us out of the " sleepy hollow " of the old Plymouth life. Personally, I cannot express the difference I see in the girls since their London experiences.

I am longing to see old Arch and to tell him how hopeful I think it all.

Yours ever, dearest,

Con.

The question, of course, was how to finance the new venture ; and, when Archibald Scott came home, it was settled that the brothers should find roughly £200 a year between them—two-thirds coming from the soldier, who could now look forward to a still better paid employ as district commissioner.

In order to talk things out, Con Scott carried off his brother in his ship on a cruise to Ireland, the Admiral (Carlton) lending his spare cabin ; and the outing was a huge success. On October 15th Con Scott wrote to his mother :

Isn't Arch just splendid ? He is so absolutely full of life and enjoyment and at the same time so keen on

his job. I expect he has told you about his hope of becoming a commissioner. He seems to have done most excellent work and shown tact and energy in an extraordinary degree. Dear old chap, he deserves to be a success—Commissioner, Consul, and Governor is the future for him I feel sure.

A month later, Archibald Scott went to Hythe to play golf, caught typhoid there and died. His mother wrote to the surviving son—then at sea with the fleet—crying out in the bitterness of her heart that it was a judgment on her for having failed to govern affairs more wisely in old days ; that this son had been forced to abandon the corps he chose, through her fault ; and that she was a burden on the children who were left to her.

This is her son's answer. The veneration of his mother that is here shown never left him :

H.M.S. " Majestic "
Channel Squadron
Gibraltar
December 2nd, 1898.

My own dearest Mother

I got your letter this morning. Don't blame yourself for what has happened, dear. Whatever we have cause to bless ourselves for, comes from you. He died like the true-hearted gentleman he was, but to you we owe the first lessons and example that made us gentlemen. This thing is most terrible to us all but is no penalty for any act of yours.

If ever children had cause to worship their mother, we feel we have, dear, and it hurts to hear you blaming yourself : you can never be a burden, but only the bond that keeps us all closer together,—the fine example that will guide us all our lives. Keep your health up,

for the sake of us all. What is left for you to do is to be the same sweet kind mother that you have always been, our guide and our friend.

In another matter I think I can afford a key other than your construction. Arch and I discussed his commissionership in all lights and in contemplating *that*, he thought of his being cut off from his corps—it was probably much in his thoughts and it was in regard to *that*, that his remark about leaving the artillery fell from him. Of this I am sure ; he never regretted leaving Weymouth. Often and often when we were about there he said, " Well, old chap, this is all very narrow. I 'm awfully glad to have got away and seen the world a bit."

Of course he loved his corps, but he never thought of it as a thing left behind and never was anything but glad to have left the dull round of garrison duty.

I 'm glad you got that nice letter from the Governor. Oh, my dear, it is something to know that everybody thought him a fine chap. His popularity was marvellous—he was such a fine gentleman. God bless you. Of course I shall come to Paris in my leave. Don't be bitter, dear.

Your loving son

Con.

Mrs. Scott went to Paris for six months to join her two daughters who were training themselves there to earn a living. The whole burden now fell on the surviving son, for there was little indeed left of the family resources. In these years, the first lieutenant of the flagship had to wear a shabby uniform with tarnished gold on it ; and it was the harder because he was fiercely ambitious to get on and realized fully that lack of means to supplement pay is a handicap to a man in his career. Letters of his, written later, when he had escaped from

poverty, and had to think seriously again of facing it with the woman of his choice, show how deeply the feeling of this had been burnt in. Such struggles often embitter a man ; but neither his gaiety nor his charm in companionship was affected. But this year made him what he remained—an anxious man.

If ever a man had reason to fix his thought on material advancement, he was in that case ; yet the ambition that urged was certainly not selfish, neither was it merely for the means to meet material needs. He had the passion for attainment. His sisters remember that in games he hated to be beaten, not because he grudged others their win, but because he was furious with himself for having failed to make the right strokes. All through life he was, if one may use a golfing metaphor, playing against bogey ; scrutinizing his own performance to see if it could have been bettered, and how, and for what reason, it had fallen short of the standard which might be reached by proper strength and judgment.

Up to the present, his profession had offered him a sufficient range of new possibilities ; but when he had mastered one branch of it he was eager to make good in another—anxious for new opportunities. It had not yet struck him that he might not be able to content himself within the ordinary limits of naval work—or that opportunity might offer outside these limits. Yet very soon after the distressing changes in his fortune which have been related, fate moved. Early in June 1899 the "Majestic" was back in home waters and Scott was spending his short leave in London.

"Chancing one day to walk down Buckingham Palace Road, I espied Sir Clements Markham on the opposite pavement, and naturally crossed, and as naturally turned and accompanied him to his house. That afternoon I learned for the first time that there was such

a thing as a prospective Antarctic expedition ; two days later, I wrote applying to command it."

This is his own account in his preface to *The Voyage of the "Discovery."* He did not know that when he was only a midshipman this far-sighted man had picked him for the leading part in a long pondered project : nor that when the two met again at Vigo, the impression created by the lad of eighteen had been confirmed by the man of eight-and-twenty, fully trained and matured. The scheme had begun to take shape in July, 1893, when Sir Clements Markham became President of the Royal Geographical Society, and resolved that an expedition should be sent to explore the Antarctic regions. Scott says :

The extraordinary strength and pertinacity of Sir Clements' character were already well known to his intimates, and they at least must have known that this resolve was momentous and signified that by hook or by crook an expedition would go. In virtue of his position as President of one of the greatest and richest societies in the world, Sir Clements was favourably placed for carrying out his determination, but few could deny that in the years of struggle and difficulty which followed, however ably and generously he was supported by his colleagues and others, it was mainly through his own unique, unconquerable personality that the expedition became a living fact.

The "living fact" reached a further stage in its embryonic growth in November, 1893, when Sir John Murray read a paper to the London Geographical Society, urging further exploration. As a result of the discussion on this paper, it was suggested that the Government should be approached with a view to sending out an

expedition consisting of two ships. The Council of the Royal Geographical Society appointed a Special Antarctic Committee, and its reports concluded with the following words :

Apart from the valuable scientific results of an Antarctic expedition, great importance must be attached to the excellent effect that all such undertakings, in which our country has been prominent, have invariably had on the Navy by maintaining the spirit of enterprise.

This indicated from the outset that the leader of the expedition must be, first, a man capable of comprehending and forwarding the scientific work, but also one eager and able to promote " the spirit of enterprise " in the British Navy—and more than that, in the British people.

These were the two linked objects to which Robert Falcon Scott was to devote the main energies of his life, and sacrifice life itself.

But neither in 1896, when the Society's Committee made its appeal to the Government and was refused, because " the existing state of public affairs made it inconvenient for the Navy to undertake such a task as was proposed " (though a later communication signified sympathy and willingness to assist), nor in May, 1897, when the Geographical Society decided to launch an expedition under its own auspices ; nor in 1898, when the Royal Society agreed to co-operate, and under the joint auspices of these two great societies funds began to be raised—not at any of these times did Lieutenant Scott of the " Majestic " have the least inkling that he would be or could be concerned in the enterprise. It is true that in the " Majestic " he served under Captain (afterwards Admiral) Sir George Egerton who had done exploration in the Arctic, and his interest was naturally directed to such matters. But, up to his casual meeting

with Sir Clements Markham, he had never thought of any such career as was to be his lot.

By June, 1899, matters had advanced. The fund was enormously strengthened in March, 1899, when Mr. Llewellyn Longstaff came forward with a gift of £25,000. Government was now moved to take a hand, and Mr. Balfour, then First Lord of the Treasury, supporting the appeal, it was settled that, if £45,000 could be raised for the fund, the Exchequer would contribute pound for pound. In this way a total of £92,000 was reached, and tenders were asked for a ship to be specially built to the plans prepared for the Committee by the Chief Naval Constructor.

Thus in June, 1899, Sir Clements Markham knew that the expedition would start ; it remained to find a leader. When Scott came up to him that day in the Buckingham Palace Road, the old anticipation revived and he knew at once that here was his man. They settled between them that an application should be sent in.

But Scott had so little expectation of its success that he said nothing of the matter to his family at the time. A full year later the appointment was made public, and he became commander of the prospective expedition.

In the meantime he was with the " Majestic," working strenuously—and playing just as hard when the chance offered. A couple of letters to his family give some picture of him when the Squadron was in the Mediterranean during the autumn of 1899 :

H.M.S. " Majestic "
Channel Squadron
Port Mahon
October 8th, 1899.

. . . I think I said I would tell about our doings at Palma Bay. Well, they were most successful. We had

a great time at our various exercises and everything went swimmingly ; they left everything in my hands and I was a great man bossing the whole show. On the second day the Admiral came ashore and I showed him round the different arrangements—of course he knew very little about it but by judiciously working his fads in, I think we made the whole thing popular and likely to be repeated if the opportunity occurs. I am quite pleased with myself because it is the first time anything of the sort has been done in the Channel for about 4 years. On the last day we had a night attack of which I drew out the whole scheme ; altogether I feel the torpedo department has asserted itself to some purpose. Now that Hickley leaves they are about to give me his work as well as my own—having no one else they can entrust it to. It suits me on the whole as having now established myself as a competent torpedo man, my policy is to show myself able to do the general service duties—but I fear for this there is very little time as probably Campbell will be promoted at Xmas and I don't quite see how they can shove me in as No. 1—however, sufficient for the day . . . and I think there is no doubt I shall be able to manage the " Vernon " next year, *if* I want it ; it is satisfactory to think that promotion is more or less certain within something like a limited time and one joins the ranks of the advancers. Meanwhile I know you will like to hear that everything flourishes with my work here. I don't know whether the Captain likes me, but at any rate he thinks me able for my work which is the main thing. He himself is a really first-rate man, absolutely master of everything, so that the Admiral surrounded by such excellent specialist advice ought not to do anything wrong but at the same time, he, the Admiral, has not in himself the abilities and knowledge for such a large Command and this is rather a drawback.

This is quite a delightful place and the first at which it is possible to get really decent exercise. The roads are most excellent and we rush about over the island on our bikes. The harbour here is little short of wonderful, it is a narrow twisted inlet for which there seems absolutely nothing to account. There is deep water all over and we were able to come rushing in within a biscuit throw of the shore on either side. Then too, thank goodness, we have left the hot weather behind; up to the present it has been horribly stuffy, but from now on it promises to be just right.

Most of the fleet have gone to Palma, Majorca, and we are here with the "Jupiter," "Blake" and "Hermione" only.

The "Jupiter" is to be inspected on Monday; it will be rather funny going round in my new role as personal staff. We leave for Gib. next week and expect a week on passage, and after a short time at Gib. we shall be off for our old haunts at Vigo and Arosa.

H.M.S. "Majestic"
Channel Squadron
Port Mahon
October 13th.

. . . We have great times here and I like the ship more than ever. The Admiral is a very cunning person; he hasn't the grasp of things like his predecessor and nothing approaching the latter's intimate knowledge of detail or wonderful judgement—but he has lots of sense, lots of nerve and means to be thought energetic. So that we are kept more than ever at drills—and Prince Louis supplies the inventive talent that always has some "surprise packet" ready for us on drill days. He and the flag lieutenant are masters of fleet movements, so that all goes well in that way. In fact I have come to the conclusion that given the present Staff it is not a hard

thing to run a fleet like this—that is while peace lasts. The Admiral will acquit himself with credit and meanwhile I don't think the efficiency of the fleet will go back at all. The torpedo man has had an innings in training work for the first time for four years—the Admiral gave me three days to work my wicked will, and it was great fun. We put up stations on shore and did the whole thing properly, ending up with a night attack on the fleet by torpedo boats. Everything went excellently well and the Admiral was exceedingly nice about it so that I think my character as a torpedo man is established, so that 's alright and I hope it makes pretty certain that I shall be offered the " Vernon " next year.

But I have my eye also on another thing which is I fear a bit out of my reach. When Campbell is promoted I should like to be thought of as first lieutenant. They may not think me sufficiently good as a general service officer however, which worries me a bit and since it would have to be done against the gunnery people I fear they won't see it in the same light. However I shall wait my opportunity—and as Hickley's work has come down on me as well as my own, it may come that way.

In the following spring they were off the Irish coast at the time when Queen Victoria, moved by the valour which Irish troops had displayed in the advance through Natal during the first stages of the Boer War, went over in her extreme old age to visit Dublin. Scott wrote :

H.M.S. " Majestic "
Channel Squadron
Berehaven, March 29th, 1900.

What a time you must be having with the " move." Poor things, you must be sick and weary of packing and unpacking, but please the fates, this is one of the last under such circumstances for the dear mother and for you.

I trust and hope that June will bring me to greater dignity and a prospect of helping matters more actively than has been possible heretofore.

We leave here on Saturday, arriving at Kingstown on Monday. The Queen comes on Tuesday, when we man ship and cheer and fire guns and generally display our loyalty—H.M. remains in the Yacht that night and lands the following day. Then I suppose we shall be swamped with visitors and shall have to give ourselves up to the enjoyment of the hour.

The "greater dignity" came on June 30th, 1900, when he was promoted to the rank of Commander. A month later, his duties in the "Majestic" lapsed, and he was free to undertake the work of the expedition.

CHAPTER II

THE VOYAGE OF THE "DISCOVERY"

N his appointment to command the expedition Scott naturally made his headquarters in London, with his mother and sisters, then living in Chelsea at 80 Royal Hospital Road. They had the upper part of a house, of which the lower was a shop ; and a large empty room behind the shop was available for his accumulations, which as the months went on grew various indeed.

He was furiously at work—beginning each day about ten o'clock and carrying on till the small hours with scarcely a check except for meals. He got his exercise —for which he was always insatiable—by running through the streets and parks on his way to the Admiralty, or to Savile Row where the offices of the expedition had been established. London did not please him ; he said he could not inflate his lungs sufficiently in that twice-breathed air. Yet Society was much disposed to welcome the good-looking young officer who had so much charm and who had been picked out for so romantic an enterprise ; he had bursts of party-going, but soon tired of them and craved for simplicity and a country life. To take his mind off his work with its anxieties and irritations—for there were many of both, and much need of diplomacy, the more as he was a young man dealing for the most part with his seniors and superiors in rank—his sisters used to make him play piquet of an evening.

But the great preoccupation of his life in these years was his mother; indeed to the very end she was always at the heart of his care.

Meantime the work went on—interesting but harassing. Scott heartily endorsed Dr. Nansen's saying, that the worst part of a polar expedition was over when the preparation was ended and the journey begun. Though he had the gift of delegation, indispensable to a leader, yet there was no part of the preparation which he did not qualify himself to oversee. His own account notes that he spent the first month after his release from the Navy "in endeavouring to collect the threads of what is going forward and in getting some further instruction in magnetism, which is to form so important a part of our undertaking." The general result achieved may be gauged by a sentence in a letter to Mrs. Scott, written after the expedition started by Dr. Hugh R. Mill, who accompanied it so far as Madeira in order to give his help, as an expert oceanographer and meteorologist, in arranging the branches of work for their departments. "Captain Scott has shown a power that, I must own, surprised me in mastering the details of all the scientific work which is being arranged."

Up to this point we have only had glimpses of Scott such as biography can gain about the youth of any remarkable person. But from the time when he was appointed to command of the Societies' Antarctic Expedition, he becomes one of the characters whom we know. The reason is that he proved to be one of those who can transmit through printed words the experience which they have gained through action and suffering; in other words, he was a born writer.

There are, of course, many who grow up desiring expression for its own sake, and generally with an

instinct for some particular medium. Scott does not belong to their class. There is not the least indication that he ever wanted to write. He was a dreamer, a maker of imaginary scenes, by part of his nature, and we may be sure that his dreams were of action. Writing was for him only an extension of the action. When the expedition was completed, he was ordered to write a report of it. What he wrote was the report of a professional seaman who was also a naval officer and therefore trained to take command if occasion arose on land. He needed, in the first place, the power of lucid and orderly narrative, setting out in orderly sequence a series of complicated operations. It is not a common gift and he proved to have it. The tradition of his service taught him that such a narrative should be simple, unaffected and above all modest, and all this came natural to him. But many men have gone through important enterprises and left accounts of them which convey all the necessary information and never sin against taste. These make useful documents. Scott's gift was to convey a great deal more than necessary information ; it was to communicate the spirit which lay behind the undertaking and even to make those who stayed at home partakers in the experience.

In order to impress others, you must first be impressionable yourself, although the impressions be not received upon the surface. This man of action, who set himself and his comrades tasks of endurance which it is painful to contemplate, and for whom discipline was a faith and a religion, was a sensitive and a romantic. No nerve in his body, no susceptibility in his mind was padded or callous. In many respects his sensibility was a woman's rather than a man's. Mr. Cherry Garrard notes that he " never knew a man who cried so easily as Scott." Those who knew him in home life agree. If a horse was down in the street, or a dog run over, Scott

would go in swiftly and do skilfully whatever needed to be done ; and when the trouble was over, as he walked away, out would come his pocket-handkerchief. He never wept dramatically, and by a concurrence of testimony, when things looked really bad and the whole chances of the expedition were in peril, Scott's face was more than usually serene. On those occasions his will was in command and the sensitive was kept under. But it was the victorious result of a lifelong struggle. He was, for instance, one of those who are abnormally moved by the sight of blood. Nor was he, in one sense, naturally fearless ; the power which apprehension had over him is shown by a single trait. He was at home when his eldest sister was for the first time confined, and he waited with another sister in the nursing-home. The doctor came in, announcing that all was prosperously over; and, as he made the announcement, Lieutenant Scott, R.N., suddenly collapsed into his arms in a dead faint.

Such a temperament is a heavy handicap, unless a man can learn to control it, and then it is invaluable because it ensures that whatever is done by its owner shall be done with intensity. Scott took more out of himself in doing difficult things than some other men would have taken ; but also he got more out of doing them. Action produced in him a singularly vivid experience and this is what makes him so well worth reading. No writer of description is worth anything unless he can communicate his sensations, and Scott's reaction to pleasure was not less than his susceptibility to pain. Many of the most delightful pages in his book have nothing to do with adventure ; and very high among them rank the pages which describe his ship specially constructed for the adventure.

He was not responsible for the plan of the "Discovery" ; the lines on which she was built had been decided after long consideration before he was named

to command her ; but she was still under construction while he was preparing the expedition, and his account of the building and the builders shows how passionately he followed the growth of the first ship ever designed in Britain for polar exploration. There is not a sentimental touch in the writing, yet the whole glows with emotion ; and it is the first example of his remarkable power to make a complicated statement easily followed and engrossing.

Yet perhaps it is not true to say that in these pages there is no trace of sentiment, for at the very opening the seaman preludes with salute to a disappearing grandeur :

> The art of building wooden ships is now almost lost to the United Kingdom ; probably in twenty or thirty years time a new "Discovery" will give more trouble and cost more money than a moderate-sized warship. This is natural enough ; it is the day of steel, of the puncher and the riveter ; the adze and the woodplane are passing away. It must become increasingly difficult to find the contractors who will undertake to build a wooden ship, or the seasoned wood and the skilled workmen necessary for its construction.
>
> The technicalities of the business may still remain in the memories of the older constructors, but have grown vague from disuse, and very few persons have cause to refresh their memories. And so it is all passing away ; even the quaint old Scotch foreman, John Smith, who played so important a part in the building of the "Discovery" has finished his work and vanished from the scene. It is a strange ending to an industry which a century ago produced those stout wooden walls that were the main defence of the kingdom.

In these last words there is suggested the romantic feeling which set a character on all that Scott wrote and

thought. Antarctic exploration was for him one chapter in the romance of England on the seas. Patriotism is a word which such men as he regard as somewhat flamboyant ; but what lay deepest in him was an idealism, the cult of his country. He was called from the routine of his profession to a new adventure, and his thought from the first was not so much to make the adventure part of his profession as to make his profession part of the adventure. He was, as he saw it, to serve England on the high seas, not strictly as a naval officer ; yet his determination was to carry out the work not only to the honour of his country, but to the honour of his service. It was due to his persistence that the "small naval nucleus" originally contemplated spread till the ship's company, except for its expert scientists, was recruited almost entirely from the Royal Navy. Mr. Goschen, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, began by authorizing the loan of Scott himself and one other officer, Lieutenant Royds.[1] This was enlarged to include the concession of an engineer, a carpenter, and a boatswain. But, says Scott, "from an early date I had set my mind on obtaining a naval crew. I felt sure that their sense of discipline would be an immense acquisition, and I had grave doubts as to my own ability to deal with any other class of men."

Persistence was rewarded: officers high in the service backed the request that men should be allowed to volunteer for the expedition, and when the Treasury called for justification, the answer was given that such undertakings notably promoted the spirit of enterprise in the service. Men were allowed to go as to a school of courage, endurance and resourcefulness, in which they must face new dangers, new hardships and new difficulties. Discipline was to be put to novel tests.

[1] Now Rear-Admiral Sir Charles Royds, K.B.E., Asst. Commissioner of Police.

This was, I think, the spirit which governed Scott's undertaking from the first ; it is certainly the spirit of his report, not only to the public but to the Admiralty. But the detail of his task was complex and varied, and for a full year he had to be plunged in it. What stamps the man is that neither in preparation nor in the carrying out of the enterprise was detail ever allowed to submerge the main governing idea. It was laborious practical work carried out in the temper of high chivalry.

In search for practical experience he went, this year, accompanied by Sir Clements Markham, to Norway where Dr. Nansen put at their service all his knowledge of polar journeyings. A note, written on October 12th, 1900, to his mother gives an impression of this great man.

We go daily to Christiania to interview people, Nansen chiefly. He is quite a great man, absolutely straightforward and wholly practical, so our business flies along apace. I wish to goodness it would go as well in England.

It is an education alone in the work to meet Nansen. He never makes a remark that is not quite to the point and takes the very greatest pains. Yesterday he and a professor named Hjort put to sea especially to show us all their dredging and other deep sea apparatus.

From Norway Scott went to Berlin ; for the Societies' expedition did not stand alone : Germany, acting in concert with an honourable rivalry, was planning a complementary enterprise. Under Professor von Drygalski a ship was to sail and push exploration on the west of the Antarctic continent. It appeared to Scott that the German preparations were in much greater forwardness ; and the fear lest England should be left behind in a naval enterprise greatly disturbed him.

The task which lay before him now was one of diplomacy. He was a young man of thirty-two unknown

CAPTAIN SCOTT'S MOTHER

outside his profession, and all preparations were in the charge of committees and sub-committees, consisting of men, many of them eminent and all having recognized positions. He had to persuade them to transfer to him the right to make operative decisions in each department—subject to a fixed limit of expenditure in each, supervised by a Finance Committee, which should make the actual payments.

His kindred remember the anxiety which this diplomacy cost him. They remember as the period of greatest stress those two months in which the "Discovery," fully rigged and engined, lay in London Docks to take in her complicated cargo. Every day Scott was on board of her and every day he was beset with an unwelcome multitude of inquisitive visitors. But there were compensations for this when some of the admirals or captains under whom he had served came round to inspect unofficially, and said good words of his new and independent command and of what was being done on board her.

Royalty also gave encouragement. When the "Discovery," outward bound, put in at Cowes, King Edward and Queen Alexandra came aboard. The visit was informal, but showed how widespread was the public interest in this venture. It had been arranged that Mrs. Scott should be on board the "Discovery" when this visit took place: and she had the privilege of pinning to her son's breast the ribbon of the then newly founded Victorian Order, which King Edward had bestowed on the explorer. Scott was touched by the honour but more touched by the kindness of his old admiral, Sir George Egerton, who had contrived the whole—more especially the presence of Mrs. Scott.

For the account of the voyage from London Docks to Cape Town and from Cape Town to New Zealand

readers must go to Scott himself.[1] One thing, however, needs to be noted. When the "Discovery" left New Zealand for the Antarctic, she was far too deeply laden. She was, as Scott says briefly, "not in a condition in which we could look forward with pleasure to crossing the stormiest ocean in the world. We could only trust that Providence would vouchsafe us an easy passage to the South." Providence was kind; but a great risk had been taken; and at his second venture Scott took it again, and not with impunity. But his main care was to provide for the efficiency of the expedition; the decks of the "Discovery" were hampered, as later were those of the "Terra Nova," very largely with animals carried to be food. Fresh meat and variety of provisions meant better and keener workers. Risks had to be recognized, but this was not a service in which risks should be shunned. It was Scott's duty and his care to see that none should be taken uselessly. But when men go out to war, risks are part of duty; and the expedition was a challenge to one of nature's strongest citadels, in which up to that time only the barest lodgment had been effected by any assailant.

Captain Cook had crossed the Antarctic circle for the first time in 1773, and saw either solid ice or ice-covered land. His repeated voyages demonstrated for the first time that the ocean encircled the world completely about the 60th parallel of latitude, and therefore that it was possible to sail round whatever region surrounded the South Pole. They proved also (in Scott's words) that "whatever land might exist to the South must be a region of desolation hidden beneath a mantle of ice and snow."

In 1838, at the Royal Society's instance, Government decided to send an exploring expedition under Captain Ross, who with the "Erebus" and "Terror," strongly

[1] *The Voyage of the "Discovery,"* chap. iii.

constructed sailing ships, crossed the Antarctic circle, found himself opposed by heavy masses of pack-ice, but pushed on resolutely into the pack, steering south. After five days "the vessels burst forth to the south into an open sea," and on January 8th, discovered "the glorious mountainous country of Victoria Land." He had found a point where the frozen continent's coast-line is deeply embayed, and he was able to sail two hundred miles further southward beyond the utmost penetration then as yet recorded. He saw and surveyed the mountain chain from the sea; he had the first sight of two lofty volcanic peaks, one of them still active, to which he gave the names of Erebus and Terror. Close to the foot of these, he discovered a monstrous wall of ice stretching continuously to the eastward for four hundred miles; and he named it The Great Barrier. No landing was effected. Ross's party never set foot on the continent which they discovered. Thus all that was common knowledge about the Antarctic continent, before Scott, was the impression left on readers of Ross's narrative, of the great ice rampart, over which emerged the twin heads of volcanoes. It was left for Scott and his companions to prove that the Barrier was in reality a portal, a level approach by which human beings might find access to the polar continent itself. For the Barrier was no more and no less than a plain of ice, resting on the water which filled up the bight of that vast bay, to which in honour of its discoverer was given the name of Ross's Sea.

Yet in truth the Barrier was rightly named; for nearer to the Pole than its edge no man could go on shipboard. All travel thereafter must be over ice and snow where Nature offered nothing but cold death, and man must advance like a snail, dragging his house with him. It was left for Scott and his companions to discover that the plain to be traversed extended for three hundred and sixty miles to the South. There a great

mountain range must be pierced or scaled ; and beyond that again, man breaking through was to find one featureless expanse, a ridgy ocean of desert snow—the barren goal of endeavour.

They were not the first who had set foot on the unknown continent. In 1894 the crew of a Swedish whaler, the "Antarctica," pushing far south in search of new hunting ground, landed at Cape Adare on the north-west shore of Ross's Sea. In 1896 an expedition provided by Sir George Newnes, and sailing on "The Southern Cross," reached this spot under a scientist, Mr. Borchgrevink, set up a hut and spent in it a polar winter ; but no exploration of the interior was carried out. The surrounding land and coasts were however surveyed and names were affixed ; and when Scott in the "Discovery" broke through the pack on January 8th, 1902, he knew what to look for, and he recognized the peaks of what Borchgrevink's party had called the Admiralty Range, rising behind Cape Adare and the expanse of Robertson Bay which is enclosed to the westward of this long curving point.

Here then, picking up the trail of their forerunners, they made their first landing ; and significantly enough their first errand was to visit a grave. One of Scott's party, the physicist Mr. Louis Bernacchi, had been on the "Southern Cross," and he led the way to where a wooden cross had been set above their naturalist Hanson, who died during that winter and was buried high on the hill slope above the beach where the hut had been built.

In the hut itself at Cape Adare Scott left, conspicuously placed, a tin cylinder containing a record of his movements.

Then on January 10th the "Discovery" weighed anchor, and rounding the point of Cape Adare sought to proceed southward with the mountainous coastline on their right hand. But as they left Robertson Bay, a

strong tide swept out towards the point, and carried them towards where a chain of icebergs had grounded in shallow water. They were in the midst of drifting floes and had to face the danger of being pinned between these and the bergs, where, strong as their ship was, she must have been crushed—as happened, twelve years later, to another vessel under Shackleton's command.

Escape came with the tide's turning : the floes fell apart and the ship could push her way under steam to the open water. "For me," Scott says, "the lesson had been a sharp, and I have no doubt a salutary one ; we were to fight the elements with their icy weapons and once and for all this taught me not to undervalue the enemy."

Yet during the pinch of that danger, except the watch and Scott himself, all the crew were asleep in their bunks below. "A fuss was rarely made in the 'Discovery' unless there was some good reason," he notes.

For a week from the 10th they stood southwards exploring the coast, and recognizing the features which had been first named and charted by Sir James Ross. To the south of Coulman Island they found that a great indentation, which Borchgrevink's expedition had named Lady Newnes Bay, was filled with "what we subsequently came to call barrier ice, a sheet of such thickness that its towering ice-cliffs stand in many places 150 feet above the water"—pointing to a thickness of double that depth submerged.

As the voyage went on, soundings were taken everywhere and noted ; when opportunity offered, a trawl was put out to bring in specimens of marine life for the biologist, Mr. Hodgson ; and from time to time, the ship was made fast to stationary ice, and seals and penguins were killed and brought aboard for food. The sensitive in Scott little relished this slaughter, and he says :

"It seemed a terrible desecration to come to this quiet

spot only to murder its innocent inhabitants and stain the white snow with blood ; but necessities are often hideous and man must live."

On January 18th they sighted, though more than a hundred miles away, the most unmistakable of all landmarks, Mount Erebus with smoke issuing from its summit ; and now began serious search for a harbour in which to pass the winter, which must begin in March. By January 21st they were on the latitude of Erebus, still standing south into what Ross had charted as a bay ; but Scott had a hope that it might prove to be a strait. In a sense, his hope was justified. Erebus and Terror are the peaks of Ross Island, triangular shaped, with sides roughly forty miles long ; but to the east and south the island is fast knit to the permanent ice of the barrier. North of it is open sea, having only a fringe of pack beyond it; to the west is a strait, McMurdo Sound, that in winter becomes frozen. Thus access by water to the southern angle of Ross Island is possible during that part of the Antarctic summer when the ice breaks up ; and from Ross Island to the opposite shore of McMurdo Sound men can cross on foot only during the Antarctic winter.

These facts govern the movements of Scott's expeditions in the Antarctic ; for he made his headquarters in 1902 and again in 1911 on the shore of Ross Island which faces McMurdo Sound. Not only he, but those who followed in his track, used this inlet as their base. Whatever comes or goes, this corner at least of that frozen continent " is for ever England."

All that was decided in January 1911 was that a base should be chosen somewhere about McMurdo Sound ; Scott had found a possible wintering place on the mainland at what he called Granite Harbour ; and evidently Ross Island offered an alternative. Now, since he could

sail no further southward, the ice barrier blocking him, he turned and passing to the north of Ross Island effected a landing (with much difficulty) at Cape Crozier, where the Great Barrier joins on to this outlying mountain mass. Here, in the middle of a penguin rookery, a post was set up and a cylinder attached to it, reporting the "Discovery's" adventures and plans.

Then from the 22nd to the 30th of January, they steamed eastward, having on their right hand the interminable ice-cliff. On the 30th, through cloud and mist, land hitherto undiscovered came in sight. On February 6th it became clear that the trend of the land was north-eastward, so that progress to the south was impossible in this direction ; and, naming the new country King Edward VII's Land, the "Discovery" turned back. By February 8th they were again in McMurdo's Sound, and finally decided to fix their winter quarters far up the Sound in a little bay near the island's southern corner.

By the middle of February the "Discovery" was made fast to the south of a projection from the island which was christened Hut Point, and under that name became a landmark in the Antarctic for a succession of explorers. Already before the ice had formed to hold the vessel fast, parties were busy on shore setting up huts which had been brought south aboard her. Officers and men were practising the art of ski-running. It was new to them, as indeed was all connected with the business on which they were engaged. Experimental sledging parties were sent out, and the first of these came back on February 22 after three days out. They had been frost-bitten ; they had found great difficulty in getting their tent up ; they had infinite trouble with the cooking apparatus ; they did not know how to pack their sledges. This journey had been simply an effort of manhauling ; but for the future, dogs were to take a share ; and no man in the expedition had ever

handled a dog team. In addition to all, Scott himself, who had proposed to take charge of the first serious sledging journey, sprained his leg while ski-running and the party had to be despatched without him on March 4th, under Royds, to make the first journey on the Great Barrier plain. Meanwhile Scott had to content himself with supervising the installation of civilized comfort in this fastness of inhuman desolation. An iron windmill was set up on deck to drive a dynamo, and within a month after the ship was made fast in her winter quarters, they had electric light.

But then things began to happen which showed how the fastness was defended against invasion. Twelve had gone out with Royds's party, assisted by four dogs to each sledge. The purpose was to reach Cape Crozier, where already the post had been erected with a message for any relief ship that might be sent in quest of them. Details of their position and intentions would now be added to this.

A glance at the map will show that the southernmost part of Ross Island which Scott had named Cape Armitage, in compliment to his navigating officer, is a long spit jutting due south. Hut Point and the little bay where the "Discovery" lay are on the west of this, facing McMurdo Sound. East of this cape is the ice-plain of the Barrier. When the Sound is frozen, the road from Hut Point to the Barrier and so to Cape Crozier is along the ice and round Cape Armitage. But the ice had broken away round the cape, and this party had therefore to make its way over the ridgy spine of ice-covered land—a climb of some 800 feet—over which the two sledges must be dragged.

Dropping from this, they reached the level ice to the east, but soon found that its surface was ridgy as a wind-swept sea ; and in parts soft snow made the dragging very heavy. Advance was easiest on snow shoes, but

only three pairs of ski were with the party ; and so Royds sent back eight men under Lieutenant Barne. This party after two days' travel found themselves on the eastern side of the peninsula opposite to a conspicuous height on the ridge which had been named Castle Rock. They set out to climb from the ice plain, and after hard work hauling the sledge up, the ridge was reached shortly after mid-day. Then came one of the sudden blizzards which make the Antarctic terrible. All landmarks were obscured. Shelter was found in the lee of some rocks and tents were put up ; the men, already frost-bitten, crept into them. But they were wholly new to these conditions ; every moment they expected the tents to be carried away ; and the ship with all her comfort was only a mile or two from them, at the bottom of the hill.

That evening at dusk, as Scott was below on the "Discovery," word was brought that four men were walking towards the ship. They came aboard exhausted and excited and gradually the tale was put together.

It had been decided to leave the sledges on the ridge and make for the ship. Advancing through the drift, and keeping touch of each other as best they could, they found themselves on a steep slope ; suddenly first one man, then another had disappeared from the party of nine. Barne the officer had gone back with one man to look for the stragglers, and no more was seen of these two also. The five left had after a while tried to push on ; suddenly in the smother of snow they found themselves on the edge of a precipice over the sea, and one man, Vince, unable to check himself, shot out over the edge.

Where the rest were, no man could say ; but Wild, one of those who had returned, thought he could guide a party to where he left them. Scott, still crippled, could only wait for tidings while a search went out under

Armitage the navigating officer. Hours passed before the party came back, bringing three of the five lost. All three had been saved from the same fate as Vince's only by a kind of miracle.

That was the first reply of the Antarctic continent to the explorer's challenge. Scott lay down that night believing that he had lost two men almost within call of his base ; Royds's party of three officers were still out on their journey, and a less anxious man than he might well have been troubled for their fate, where all was so untried and unknown.

Fate spared him somewhat. On the second day after these happenings, a man was seen approaching the ship; it was Hare, the first who had been lost, and who after vain efforts to rejoin had lain down under shelter of a rock. He had slept thirty-six hours coiled up like one of the dogs under a coat of snow and escaped even frostbite.

The anxiety about Royds and his companions lasted till March 20th, when they reached the ship safely. But they had failed to reach their destination, as there again a steep climb over the end of a mountain was needed and blizzards checked the attempt.

The upshot was that within a month after establishing his headquarters Scott had lost one man and a dog in the blizzard ; and two more dogs had been destroyed by their fellows, as the pack were left ashore. Meantime little or nothing except the installation had been effected ; and another tentative sledge journey, with Scott himself in charge, proved no more prosperous and was abandoned after three days. Yet something had been gained ; and it was priceless. They had bought experience ; and the price exacted for it had not broken their courage. He states the gain :

That we were eventually able to make long and successful sledge journeys is no doubt due to the mistakes

which we made and to the experience which we gained during the first barren attempts of this autumn, and yet more to the fact that we resolved to profit by them, and thoroughly took our lesson to heart. I do not mean to imply that our education was complete—as a matter of fact, we never ceased to learn new tips or to adopt new devices, and the general sledging work of the second summer was vastly superior to that of the first—but it was the crushing ineffectiveness of our early efforts which taught us the first great lesson.

Scott's answer to the challenge of the Antarctic was to concentrate his study upon the preparation for sledging. He had much else to do : to supervise and animate the whole varying work that must be carried on through the polar winter of continual night. Light was the first need, and when the polar winds blew his windvanes to pieces and shattered the mast on which they worked, these moderns had another resource than electricity. Carbide gave them acetylene, a perfect light to work by. Work went on, complicated and various, magnetic, meteorological, biological ; and play also was organized. They were a busy and a happy ship's company, and the record of their activities is there to be read in Scott's narrative and needs no re-telling for the purpose of this book.

Only two things should be noted. The first is that on this expedition, their base was their ship. The hut became merely a store, and a workroom for the scientists. In Scott's later journey, explorers were landed and became landsmen ; on this, they were seamen throughout. The second point to note is that even their seamanship found itself confronted with new and unforeseen chances. When ice formed solidly about the vessel, the boats were hoisted out to give more room for the awning which should keep the snow off decks, and the boats were left on the ice where the snow soon covered them. This

extra weight pressed them into the ice and they became stuck solid in the floe ; there was grave danger lest they should be forced right below the water. All that could be done was to keep digging away the snow covering, and only, after long months, in the following summer could they be disengaged by blasting—which naturally left them badly shaken.

Such an instance shows how completely remote from ordinary experience were all the conditions of this strange life, when even in the matters most intimately familiar to them a company of sailors and scientists under a most accomplished and scientific seaman so far failed to foresee a result of simple natural forces. All the traps in the Antarctic were simple, natural, and deadly. Yet after the first brush, bringing its first casualties, they were all avoided in this expedition.

Only two men in the ship's company had previous experience for a guide. Armitage, the senior officer, a First Officer of the P. & O. line, had been lent from 1894 to 1898 for Arctic service in the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition. Bernacchi, the physicist, had wintered at Cape Adare. The rest, including Scott himself, were novices at the close of that Antarctic autumn, when the sun left them on April 20th. Two years later, they were men handled and made, and for the particular type of sledge journey to which Scott devoted his energy and theirs, the world had not their equals.

Being on shipboard during that winter season, wardroom and mess-deck naturally messed apart ; but Scott laid down one principle : the same food was provided for wardroom and for mess-deck. Officers who had brought luxuries of their own could have them ; but essentially the diet was the same, fore and aft. Scott tells with satisfaction how he had dealt with a complaint from one of his few troublesome hands, that some cake issued was uneatable. A messenger was sent for a slice

from the cake which was then being served to the officers and eaten by them with enjoyment. It was the same and admitted to be the same. "As a consequence," says Scott, "I could express my opinion of the complaint and its maker with the utmost freedom and proceeded to do so. . . . When we come to the hard sledging work that is before us," he adds, "officers and men must live and work alike in every respect." These were the principles on which naval discipline was maintained in the Antarctic regions in a ship's company to which even the Merchant Shipping Act scarcely applied.

CHAPTER III

THE SLEDGE JOURNEYS FROM THE "DISCOVERY"

ON August 21st, 1902, the sun came back, but behind driving snow-squalls. Next day, however, was lenient and men climbed the hill slopes to get a longer look. Scott writes as one who had been starved for beauty. At all times delight of the eye was strong in him; but sunlight was more than beauty only, and he makes us feel it:

"For long our blinking eyes remained fixed on that golden ball and on the fiery track of its reflection; we seemed to bathe in that brilliant flood of light, and from its flashing rays to drink in new life, new strength and new hope. This glorious sun was bringing the light of day and some measure of warmth to the bleak, desolate region about us, and heaven only knows how far prophetic thoughts took us over its trackless wastes before those beneficent rays should again vanish and sombre darkness once more descend."

Yet the explorer's instinct was even more urgent than the simple human pleasure in renewed radiance. Expeditions had been planned radiating west, south and east, and the thought of their prospects fascinated him.

"Meanwhile the eye has passed on to scan that great frowning range of mountains to the west which has

looked down on us in such ghostly, weird fashion throughout the winter months. Seen now in the daylight, what a wild confusion of peaks and precipices, foothills, snowfields, and glaciers it presents ! How vast it all is ! And how magnificent must be those mountains when one is close beneath them ! But what of our travellers to the west ? Here the skyline runs from peak to peak with ridges that can rarely dip below 12,000 feet, and it is beyond hope that they can scale to such heights.

But northward of west these lofty ridges fall again, and the ranges which stretch on beyond till they are lost in the fiery glow of the sun are lower than this monstrous pile in the west. Perhaps it is in this direction that we shall conquer the western land. It is to the west more than anywhere one realizes the impossibility of understanding the conditions until our parties have been forth to face them ; that there will be immense difficulties there can be little doubt. To expect to find a smooth and even road in that great chaos of hills and glaciers would be to expect the impossible, and I feel that if we ever do get beyond those mountains we shall have deserved well of our country."

There was no delaying. All through the winter preparation had been busy. Clothing had been revised, sledges refitted, for a task that was to prove more difficult than any experienced in the Arctic circle. The reasons are simple. Cold was much greater ; spring temperatures falling to seventy degrees below zero, twenty degrees beyond the northern record ; summer temperatures being rarely above freezing point and as a rule below it. Added to this was the terrible persistency and violence of wind ; and finally, whereas in the Arctic, sledging had been done over the comparatively smooth surface of sea ice, Antarctic travel was either on mountainous land, or on the Barrier, so long solidified

that its snow surface is like that of land. Scott tried the matter out and found that on the recently formed sea ice of McMurdo Sound he and his companions could cover twenty miles a day, and with a light load once did thirty-six ; but their going on the Barrier surface—ankle deep and often deeper—showed very different results.

There is no need here to summarize the detail which Scott has set out in the wonderful chapters[1] on his preparation, with general reflections on polar ski-ing. But we may note his determination that the experience which he gained should be fully at the disposal of those who should come after him ; the next explorer should be spared his mistakes. He worked and wrote like a man on a service whose tradition is continuous and constantly amended and revised.

One personal touch in the matter of equipment for sledging may be stressed:

> Of course all personal property was strictly limited by a given weight and if a man chose to forgo a pair of socks and take out the weight in tobacco, he was at liberty to do so. I remember gazing at my spare suits and wishing to heaven I 'd brought tobacco instead.

After short trial trips, which showed at least that the business of packing sledges had been learnt, exploration began, on September 5th. Three parties went out, of which two depended entirely on manhauling. Armitage took one northwards, skirting the coast of Victoria Land in search of some way to circumvent the chain of mountain which blocked access to the west. Royds went south-west, to explore a glacier falling from the mountains which might offer a possible approach to the

[1] *The Voyage of the "Discovery,"* chaps. x.-xi.

land beyond them. But the main trek, though still only a trial trip, aimed due southwards across the long frozen plain ; and for it Scott took all the sixteen dogs and two companions—Lieutenant Barne, who had been his shipmate on the " Majestic," and an officer from the merchant service, whose name was to become famous—Ernest Shackleton. They got away on September 17th.

The first day showed fourteen statute miles, gained in eight and a half hours from the start, with a temperature of 48 degrees below zero. They were dead beat, and still new to the business ; Scott woke to find himself in the open under driving snow ; the tent had blown loose and all inside was covered with snow. They spent that day holding the canvas down by sheer strength, for they could not attempt to refix it in the blizzard. Cooking was impossible. When after thirty hours of sheer misery, the wind abated and let them work, their decision was to turn back, get their garments dried and start afresh. Marching back in a temperature of 50, their clothes froze solid on them. " My trousers," says Scott, " might have been cut out of sheet iron."

" So here we are," he wrote on September 19th, " having accomplished nothing except the acquisition of wisdom. It will certainly be a very long time before I go to sleep again in a tent which is not properly secured."

Such was the apprenticeship—or the beginning of apprenticeship. On September 24th they were off again, Barne, whose fingers had suffered terribly from frost-bite, being replaced by the boatswain Feather. This time progress was quicker, but within three days they had got among ice mounds, where the solid plain was framed by bergs pressed together. These mounds had " broad ugly cracks all over them."

Scott led the march, the dogs in two teams, each team dragging two sledges ; a man leading each team. The orders were that the teams should follow exactly in

Scott's course no matter what twists and turns he might make.

Notwithstanding the bad light, I could see the bridged crevasses where they ran across the bare ice surface by slight differences in shade, and where they dived into the valleys; though I could not see them, I found that the bridges were strong enough to bear. I stuck as much as possible to the snowy patches, but this necessitated a very irregular course, and the dogs invariably tried to cut corners. In this manner we proceeded for some time, but suddenly I heard a shout behind, and looking round, to my horrow saw that the boatswain had disappeared; there stood the dog-team and sledges, but no leader. I hurried back and saw that the trace disappeared down a formidable crevasse, and to my relief the boatswain was at the end of the trace.

I soon hauled him up and inquired if he was hurt, to which, being a man of few words, his only reply was, "Damn the dog!" from which I gathered that "Nigger" had tried to cut a corner and so pulled his leader at the wrong moment, and, incidentally, that the boatswain wasn't much hurt. This evening the boatswain has shown me his harness; one strand was cut clean through where it fell across the ice-edge. Altogether he had a pretty close call.

After this they joined the dog-teams into one, hauling the string of sledges, and proceeded. In half an hour there was another shout and the rearmost sledge was hanging down another crevasse. Only then did the party realize that it was necessary to march roped as in the Alps.

"Looking back," Scott says, "I cannot but think our procedure was extremely rash. I have not the least doubt now that this region was a very dangerous one

and the fact that we essayed to cross it in this light-hearted fashion can only be ascribed to our ignorance."

This was another stage in apprenticeship ; but no training could enable Antarctic travellers to avoid crevasses ; the experience of falling down and being dragged up became in certain passages of the exploration almost a commonplace.

This journey extended only some eighty-five miles out, to where a depot of food was laid as a base for the future. For they had a guess of the future.

We have just been gazing with anxious eyes on the road to the south. We have passed out of the region of the high snow furrows and it seems probable that even those which we have would be lost as one advances to the south. One conceives a plain with the surface growing smoother and possibly softer, but what will it be like to tramp on day after day and week after week, over such a plain ?

That was what they were to learn, and to learn that it could be a good deal worse than they anticipated. But on the way home, going by sledge, having dumped their load, they covered the eighty-five miles in three days and rejoined the ship in good fettle, to make the experience of satisfying a " sledge hunger." But Scott was aware of something amiss and kept back from him. After dinner he learnt the next form of the Antarctic's resistance. Scurvy had appeared in the party which Armitage had headed. There had not been a sufficient supply of fresh food, or its temporary substitutes. The disease had crept in and the only remedy was abundant supply of fresh meat—which the seals must supply.

Reading the story of these successive shocks, it is astonishing to find the buoyancy with which the leader

sustained them. Every step was taken to prevent recurrence of scurvy, but none of them were allowed to interfere with plans for the future. Armitage was still left in charge of the attempt to cross the mountains to the west ; Scott was to push out again for his main journey southwards, re-provisioning himself at the depot laid nearly ninety miles out. But, in order to lengthen the possible period of absence, a party of twelve under Barne was to accompany the dog team, carrying extra stores ; at a given point these would transfer their superfluous stores so as to load the dog team once more up to the limit of what it could haul, and then turn back.

The start was made on November 1st, and for a fortnight the two parties marched together. On November 15th, Scott with his two companions and the entire train of 19 dogs set out—dragging for a start thirteen weeks' provisions, 1850 lbs.—almost 100 lbs. to each dog. But each day would lighten the load by 30 to 40 lbs. and at the outset the men proposed to haul beside the dogs.

Before the parties separated they had almost reached the 79th parallel: it was further south than any man yet had been.

Shackleton was again one of the pioneers who accompanied the leader ; but this time the third man was neither Barne nor the boatswain nor any seaman, but a civilian—Dr. Edward Wilson. His name also is written imperishably in the annals of polar travel ; and no man among them all has left a memory that is held in more affectionate remembrance. His post on the expedition was that of second doctor ; he was also vertebrate zoologist and artist ; and we owe to his accomplished pencil much of our power to visualize experience in these strange scenes.

The detail of what followed on that first march of exploration pushed to the last limit of safety—and indeed beyond it—must be read in Scott's own narrative. Here

it is only necessary to emphasize how indomitable were these pioneers.

Confident in ourselves, confident in our equipment, and confident in our dog team, we can but feel elated with the prospect that is before us.

So Scott wrote in his diary on November 15th. Yet on that day they had only covered three miles. The surface was so bad that next morning they saw nothing for it but to divide the load, drag half a certain distance and return for the rest, thus covering every mile three times. Even relaying thus with half loads, the dogs had no heart in the work. The man who had the worst job of the three was he who must use the whip. Where the trouble was, they did not know ; possibly the food was wrong. But they were using a means of transport unfamiliar to them, uncongenial and even detestable. Advance was at a snail's pace, and then sickness came on the dogs. On December 16th they decided to form a depot with half the load.

As I write, I scarcely know how to describe the blessed relief it is to be free from our relay work. For one and thirty awful days we have been at it and whilst I doubt if our human endurance could have stood out much more, I am quite sure the dogs could not. It seems now like a nightmare which grew more and more terrible towards its end.

They went on with four weeks' provision, leaving their pile of stuff marked in the snow as best they could.

All will be well if we can get back within four weeks and if we have a clear day to find the spot.

These were formidable "ifs." They knew already how a blizzard could obliterate all possibility of vision. Also, on the next morning, a clear sun showed that unknown to themselves they had been marching among crevasses. They soon knew, moreover, that they had cut the ration too fine. "We are gradually passing from the hungry to the ravenous." The simple remedy would have been to have limited the outward journey to two weeks instead of four, but this thought does not seem to have been even considered.—The dogs were dying one by one, or being killed to feed their fellows.

Any day they might all give out and leave us entirely dependent on ourselves. In such a case, if things were to remain just as they are, we should have about as much as we could do to get home ; on the other hand, will things remain just as they are ? It seems reasonable to hope for improvement, we have seen so many changes in the surface; at any rate, we have discussed this matter out, and I am glad to say that all agree in taking the risk of pushing on.

That was the spirit of the whole adventure. Risks had to be recognized ; but there was no reason why they should not be taken. Yet on the date of this entry, Wilson and Scott knew that Shackleton was showing symptoms of scurvy. But they went on. On December 22nd :

Hunger is gripping us very tightly. I never knew what it was like before and I shall not be particularly keen on trying it again.

On Christmas Day they had two square meals, and escaped what was the last straw of misery, the obsession of hunger's imaginings :

We have been chattering away gaily, and not once has the conversation turned to food. We have been wondering what Christmas is like in England—possibly very damp, gloomy, and unpleasant, we think ; we have been wondering, too, how our friends picture us. They will guess that we are away on our sledge journey, and will perhaps think of us on plains of snow ; but few, I think, will imagine the truth, that for us this has been the reddest of all red-letter days.

But the escape was for one day only. Then Wilson got snow blindness, and marched in agony ; but they went on. New landmarks were discovered : a glorious mountain " fitting to bear the name of him whom we must always most delight to honour, and Mount Markham it shall be called in memory of the father of the expedition." Worn and famished as the men were, Scott could write with rapture of the mountain scenery which now opened on their view—some three hundred miles beyond the seaward edge of the Barrier.

Not till the last day of the year did they consent to turn their faces northward and homeward. The furthest point reached was in latitude 82° 16′ 33″, some 500 miles from the Pole. The dogs were too worn out to recognize the change of direction and respond. By the 7th of January all pretence of using them was at an end and the men were hauling alone—helped only by a sail which the southerly wind impelled.

But who could describe the relief this is to us ? No more cheering and dragging in front, no more shouting and yelling behind, no more clearing of tangled traces, no more dismal stoppages, and no more whip. All day we have been steadily plodding on with the one purpose of covering the miles by our own unaided efforts, and one feels that one would sooner have ten such days than one

with the harrowing necessity of driving a worn-out dog team. For the first time we were able to converse freely on the march, and in consequence the time passed much more rapidly.

It is unnecessary to explain that the men were carrying food for the dogs—often the remains of a dog who had been killed for food because he could work no more. Scott's observations on this are too characteristic to be omitted :

I must confess that I personally have taken no part in the slaughter ; it is a moral cowardice of which I am heartily ashamed, and I know perfectly well that my companions hate the whole thing as much as I do. At the first this horrid duty was performed by Wilson, because it was tacitly agreed that he would be by far the most expert, and later, when I was perfectly capable of taking a share, I suppose I must have shrunk from it so obviously that he, with his usual self-sacrifice, volunteered to do the whole thing throughout. And so it has been arranged, and I occupy the somewhat unenviable position of allowing some one else to do my share of the dirty work.

Some of the dogs spared the men this necessity, by simply dropping behind and disappearing. On January 11th only two were left keeping company. They did no work, and were fed ; but they had a certain grim value, for though the party was now approaching the position of its depot, the weather was heavily overcast.

There is no doubt we are approaching a very critical time. The depot is a very small spot on a very big ocean of snow ; with luck one might see it at a mile and a half or two miles, and fortune may direct our course

within this radius of it ; but, on the other hand, it is impossible not to contemplate the ease with which such a small spot can be missed. In a blizzard we should certainly miss it ; of course we must stop to search when we know we have passed its latitude, but the low tide in the provision-tank shows that the search cannot be prolonged for any time, though we still have the two dogs to fall back on if the worst comes to the worst.

The food bag was formidably light. "We could finish all that remained in it at one sitting, and still rise hungry." That was on January 12th. Next day at midnight, the telescope revealed two dots on the horizon: the depot, and three weeks' food. But Shackleton's condition worsened ; there was no doubt of scurvy ; he could not be allowed to attempt pulling on the march; it was much if he could still travel on his own feet. All food that could be now carried was essential for the men, and the last two dogs had to be killed.

This was the saddest scene of all ; I think we could all have wept. And so this is the last of our dog team, the finale to a tale of tragedy, I scarcely like to write of it. Through our most troublous times we always looked forward to getting some of our animals home. At first it was to have been nine, then seven, then five, and at the last we thought that surely we should be able to bring back these two.

These passages make us sharply aware of the sensitive in Scott ; but they have another importance for any study of his life. No man will face doing what is repugnant and revolting to his whole nature unless for a very strong motive ; also, it is probable that no one will drive animals successfully who has a strong feeling that animals should not be driven. Scott was intensely and typically

an Englishman, and the English instinct against using dogs for draught is so urgent that English law forbids the practice. That law had no application outside of the British Isles, and Scott would probably have agreed that when the conditions are favourable dogs actually have an enjoyment of their work in harness that no other beast of burden ever shows. Still, his crucial experiment with a dog team taught him to believe that dogs might also suffer to a degree that was horrible to contemplate, and might fail disastrously in accomplishing their task. He might also have admitted that men used all their lives to handling dogs in harness would possibly have got a different result out of the same team ; but the companions with whom he had to work and with whom alone he desired to work were of the like race and sympathies as himself, and his thought upon the whole matter is emphatically set down:

Probably our experience was an exceptionally sad one in this respect, but it left in each one of our small party an unconquerable aversion to the employment of dogs in this ruthless fashion. We knew well that they had served their end, that they had carried us much further than we could have got by our own exertions ; but we all felt that we would never willingly face a repetition of such incidents, and when in the following year I stepped forth in my own harness, one of a party which was dependent on human labour alone, it would not be easy adequately to convey the sense of relief which I felt in the knowledge that there could be no recurrence of the horrors of the previous season.

I have endeavoured to give a just view of the use of dogs in polar enterprises. To say that they do not greatly increase the radius of action is absurd ; to pretend that they can be worked to this end without pain, suffering, and death is equally futile. The question is

whether the latter can be justified by the gain, and I think that logically it may be ; but the introduction of such sordid necessity must and does rob sledge-travelling of much of its glory. In my mind no journey ever made with dogs can approach the height of that fine conception which is realized when a party of men go forth to face hardships, dangers, and difficulties with their own unaided efforts, and by days and weeks of hard physical labour succeed in solving some problem of the great unknown. Surely in this case the conquest is more nobly and splendidly won.

In short, the romantic in him shrank almost as sharply as the sensitive from employment of this resource. It was an unreasonable repugnance ; but behind it lay the instinctive perception, strengthened by experience, that Englishmen were not likely to get the best out of this device.

Meanwhile, it must not be forgotten that reliance on dogs left him on this first venture in a very ugly pass. On January 21st, Shackleton was being hauled on the sledges, wind and sail helping Scott and Wilson to drag their burden. At best he could travel on ski. On January 28th they reached their main depot and food in plenty ; but the sick man was worse, and grew worse till the familiar landmarks about the ship brought assurance of relief. Scott wrote :

That it is none too soon is evident. We are as near spent as three persons can well be.

It was a great moment therefore when they reached their comrades and found not only that the " Discovery," still fast in ice, was dressed and flagged to welcome them; but that a mile in the offing, moored to the floe, was a relief ship, the " Morning."

As the months passed, inevitably without news of the expedition, Sir Clements Markham and those who shared his responsibility thought it necessary to provide against what might have possibly happened ; and a new fund of over £20,000 was raised to despatch a relief expedition. The " Morning," sailing from London July 6th, 1902, left New Zealand on December 6th for the south. On January 8th she reached Cape Adare where Scott's message was found. Thence the relieving party felt their way south, and at last on January 18th landed at Cape Crozier and discovered the post which told them where the object of their search would be found. On January 29th, while Scott and Wilson were dragging their sick comrade home, the " Discovery " sighted the relieving vessel.

Thus on February 3rd, Scott as leader of the expedition had a new situation to confront. Yet it did not at once force itself on him. The " Morning " rode at anchor only a few miles distant from the point to which a year earlier the " Discovery " had steamed. It was true that ice was solid now where a year earlier there had been open water ; but for some days Scott did not realize that he might be unable to get out.

Meantime he took stock of facts. As leader, he had every right to be content. He himself with his southern party had travelled some 200 miles further south than man had ever been before. He had broken a way past the Barrier. Meanwhile, in his absence work had gone on no less vigorously than if he had been there to superintend. Armitage had established a way across the westward mountains by what was named the Ferrar Glacier. Royds had made visits to the breeding-place of Emperor penguins at the end of Cape Crozier which added new facts to the knowledge of natural history. The geologists had been busy also.

The first question to be settled was whether the

" Morning " should stand by. She had less power to force her way out than the " Discovery " ; winter was approaching and there was danger lest she should be caught in new ice. It was settled to tranship at once the relief supplies across the intervening miles of ice. By the close of February a decision was imperative. The " Morning " must sail. It was probable that, after she had left, the " Discovery " would get free, but it was not certain. The expedition had stores enough to face another year in the Antarctic, but a reduction in number was desirable. Scott asked for the names of those who desired a passage back, and eight men came forward. " The names," he writes, " are precisely those which I should have placed on the list had I undertaken the selection myself." In addition to these, Shackleton's health made it necessary that he also should return. He was replaced by a young naval officer, Lieutenant Mulock, trained in surveying. On March 2nd the " Morning " left her moorings. By the 14th it was certain that for at least another winter the " Discovery " must remain ice-bound, and the preparations for sea were all unmade ; engines were taken to pieces, steampipes disconnected, rigging unrove and stowed away. On the leader of the expedition lay the necessity of considering whether the conditions which enabled his ship to reach Hut Point had been wholly exceptional or whether he could hope that in the next year ice would break away to the cape and they would be set free. " I hold steadily to the belief," he writes, " that our detention is due to exceptional circumstances." In the meanwhile he could face what lay before him with a light heart, and wrote :

It is good to feel that there is not a single soul to mar the harmony of our relations and to know that whatever may befall one can have complete confidence in one's companions.

Moreover, there went back by the "Morning" a letter to Mrs. Scott from the man who was to be Scott's closest associate—Edward A. Wilson:

You will hear that I was privileged to accompany your son on his long sledge journey southwards—and during these three months we naturally saw a good deal of each other. I am sure he will bear me out in saying that although we got to know each other very well, we were better friends at the end of the journey even than before.

He stood the journey better than either Shackleton or myself, indeed he seems as strong as any here, and fit for any amount of exertion and exposure.

The second winter passed like the first in preparation for fresh exploring. One party was to push south, along the coast-line, investigating the bays and recesses among the mountains which Scott and his companions had noted to the west of them as they pushed south along the barrier plain. A second was to strike out eastward and determine whether the assumption were correct that the whole eastward surface of the Barrier was indeed one vast level. The third—and this enterprise Scott proposed to keep for himself—would traverse the western mountains and see what lay beyond.

A preliminary journey starting westward on September 9th discovered an easier route than that which had previously been found to the Ferrar Glacier ; and a depot of provisions was laid on the glacier in the central moraine, 2000 feet above sea level. On returning Scott found his other parties back also—the eastern group having had the first sight of Emperor penguins breeding.

Names begin to appear now which recur throughout the Antarctic sagas. On the southern party, headed by Mr. Barne, went two seamen, Joyce and Crean. Joyce had joined the expedition at the Cape ; it had been

necessary to drop one of those originally selected, and volunteers were called from the squadron then in Simon's Bay. Four hundred offered and Joyce was chosen. He was to distinguish himself in 1908, and again in 1914, under Shackleton's leadership. Crean's future lay with Scott, to whom he was personally attached from the close of this expedition till they parted on the polar plateau in December 1911. He was one of the three men who last saw Scott living.

For this sledging party, Scott had to rely entirely on men's muscles, nerves and brains. They were twelve in all—dragging four sledges. After six days' hard marching, they were far up on the glacier, when the sledges gave out. Only one of the four had runners that remained serviceable. There was no choice but to leave a depot with the one sound sledge, and return for repairs. On the first day they covered 27 miles, on the second 24, and on the third they marched the remaining 36 miles to the ship. Five days later on October 26th they were off again, averaging 25 miles a day over sea ice. It is agreed on all hands that Scott was a terrible pace-maker. Then began again the ascent of the glacier by men hauling sledges. On November 1st they reached the depot where the sledge had been left and found that a gale of extraordinary violence had forced open the lid of the instrument box and blown away some light articles. Among them was a booklet called *Hints to Travellers*, containing logarithmic tables necessary to finding longitude and latitude by observation of the sun and stars. The choice was either once more to return to the ship or " march away into the unknown without exactly knowing where we were or how to get back."

" I felt (Scott wrote in his diary) that nothing would induce me to return to the ship a second time ; I thought

it fair however to put the case to the others, and I am, as I expected, fortified by their willing consent to take the risks of pushing on."

They pushed on. They had more trouble with the sledges. They were tent-bound by a gale from November 4th to 11th, spending twenty-two hours of the twenty-four in their sleeping bags. When they did start, it was among yawning chasms in such weather that they could not see ten yards ahead. Yet by the 13th they were at the summit, nearly 9000 feet above the sea. The party had been reduced to Scott, Skelton the engineer[1] and four seamen, hauling two sledges: the other six had been sent back, Ferrar in charge of them. Things got worse and worse. On the great plateau which they had reached the wind blew right in their teeth.

I do not think that it would be possible to conceive a more cheerless prospect than that which faced us at this time, when on this lofty, desolate plateau we turned our backs upon the last mountain peak that could remind us of habitable lands. Yet before us lay the unknown. What fascination lies in that word! Could anyone wonder that we determined to push on, be the outlook ever so comfortless?

By the 19th some of the party were getting beat; but "as was natural with such men, not one of them would own that he was done." One seaman, Handsley, found his chest affected and could scarcely speak; he was taken off the hauling for a march and came to Scott that night "to beg that he might not be made an example of again." "They won't give in till they break down, and then they consider their collapse disgraceful. . . . What is one to

[1] Now Engineer Rear-Admiral R. W. Skelton, C.B., D.S.O., R.N.

do with such people ? "—" Lionhearted " he calls them, as he well might.

Marches had to be by relays, till on November 22nd Scott decided that there must be a separation. He sent back Skelton in charge of the two weaker men, and himself went ahead with Evans and Lashly, bluejackets " of Herculean strength." They weighed respectively 12 stone 10 lb. and 13 stone 8 lb. Scott himself was 11 stone 6 lb. He writes :

With these two men behind me our sledge seemed to become a living thing, and the days of slow progress were numbered.

These are leading figures of the saga. Lashly, like Crean, was one of the last to see Scott marching out of sight on the polar plateau. Evans on that day marched forward with Scott, and like Scott did not return.

The leader had improvised a method for " ascertaining the daily change in the sun's declination," from which he could get some rough estimate of the latitude ; and daily observations were taken, which could be worked out on return to the ship. So with three weeks' provisions they pushed west for eight days across this lone featureless land until, on November 30th, the diary runs :

We have finished our last outward march, thank heaven ! Nothing has kept us going during the past week but the determination to carry out our original intention of going on to the end of the month, and so here we have pitched our last camp.

So they turned, from longitude 146° 33′ E., after a march of some 300 miles as the crow flies from the ship.

The passage which follows [1] is one of the best that Scott ever wrote, but it should not be torn from its context. All that is needed is to emphasize the doggedness with which this man led out into the unknown, and the hopefulness which up to this very last day kept him alert in expectation of some change in that changeless landscape—some definite break to the "immensity of this vast plain." To reach this conclusion he had strained endurance to the utmost and taken the most formidable risks. They were seventeen marches from the glacier, where was a depot, and they had only fourteen days' full rations, with only twelve days' allowance of oil. Given clear weather he was certain they could make the journey. But, if a blizzard came—!

The cold was of course appalling. Both his men had suffered from frostbitten feet and fingers, and the task of pitching camp and any sort of packing was a torture. Yet he writes:

My companions are undefeatable. However tiresome our day's march, or however gloomy the outlook, they always find something to jest about. In the evenings we have long arguments about naval matters and generally agree that we could rule that Service a great deal better than any Board of Admiralty. Incidentally I learn a great deal about lower-deck life—more than I could hope to have done under ordinary conditions.

Again, he might well say so. Three men living in these conditions—apparently they shared one sleeping bag—must get to know more than a little of each other. Yet the relation was never altered. They came back as they went out, leader and followers; and these followers were ready then and thereafter to follow that leader quite literally to the end of the world.

[1] *The Voyage of the "Discovery,"* vol. ii. pp. 263 *et seq.* (original edn.).

From December 3rd to December 10th they plugged ahead, dragging a sledge which was the length of a small room. By the 10th they had to economize oil and have one meal cold. The weather was overcast and Scott was travelling as he says " by rule of thumb "—with the lives of all three dependent on his judgment. On the 13th there was thick drift, but " good weather or bad, we must go on now." On the 14th it cleared, only to show that they were in the middle of ice disturbances, among hummocks and crevasses, on a " hard glazed surface." They were on a downward slope, and Scott led while the two men behind the sledge held it back as best they could, till suddenly Lashly slipped ; the strain took Evans also off his feet and the whole outfit, sledge and men, was whirled downhill through a smother of drift ; sliding first, then leaving the surface in bounds of several yards, till finally with one huge leap they came down on a slope of snow and were checked. They had descended about 300 feet, and were bruised and battered but had no bone broken among them ; and they came into a shelter below the driving snow, where in clear air, as if by a sudden miracle, were disclosed the landmarks of the glacier by which they had approached, and beyond it, above the ship's moorings, the smoky peak of Erebus.

Another man might have taken credit to himself for the skill with which the reckoning had been kept ; and in point of fact Scott's rough calculations must have been extraordinarily skilful ; but chance had favoured him and he almost exaggerates the marvel:

I cannot but think that this sudden revelation of our position was very wonderful. Half an hour before, we had been lost ; I could not have told whether we were making for our own glacier or for any other, or whether we were ten or fifty miles from our depot ; it was more than a month since we had seen any known landmark.

Now in this extraordinary manner the curtain had been raised ; we found that our rule-of-thumb methods had accomplished the most accurate " land fall," and down the valley we could see the high cliffs of the Depot Nunatak where peace and plenty awaited us.

What food had been left them was scattered in the fall ; they had barely enough to furnish a couple of meals, but they advanced a stage, had lunch, and then started to cover the five or six miles between them and the depot, rejoicing in the end of all their troubles. Then, as they marched three abreast in front of the sledge to which they were harnessed, Lashly being on the right and Scott in the middle, suddenly the snow gave under Scott and Evans, who disappeared ; Lashly leapt back and the front of the sledge, running forward with the impetus of its motion, cleared the narrow crevasse down which the two had fallen and so made a bridge. One side of the frame broke under the jerk of the falling men's weight but the other held, and so did the harness by which the men were attached to it. Lashly on top had all he could do to prevent his end of the sledge from slipping towards the gulf ; his other hand was busy sliding the loose skis across to strengthen the bridge ; but he could do nothing to drag up his comrades.

By a chance Scott found a shaft of ice within reach which gave foothold, and he got the feet of Evans also on to this, thus lessening the strain ; but the only way out was to swarm up the rope, with frostbitten fingers and in heavy clothing. At last he managed it, then the two on top hauled up Evans. Within half an hour from then, they had reached the depot, had their tent up and " passed from abject discomfort to rest and peace."

" Abject discomfort " is an odd word for that day's experiences, but it is Scott's. In fact, however, the passage which describes how they went leisurely about

their camping—how Lashly "sang a merry stave as he stirred the pot," and Evans mused inarticulately over the day's happenings—gives better than it could easily be found elsewhere the exhilarating reaction which comes to men who have faced danger and have not been afraid, yet who are sharply aware of deliverance.

Next day this indomitable party "stretched over the miles with ease" on the homeward track; yet on the 17th, as if adventures had not been enough, they turned aside for geological exploration on the sides of the glacier. After that Scott resigned himself to head for home and on Christmas Eve they reached the "Discovery" again. They had covered 725 miles in fifty-nine days—for nine of which they were camp bound. Scott considered that they had "come near the limit of possible performance" for men dragging such a weight over such a country in such a climate.

Exploration by land was now over, with its hardships and dangers. There remained the adventure of the ship. Scott's first thought when he sighted McMurdo Sound on the return from that desperate journey was that possibly they might find the way across barred to sledges, but open for the vessel. But the ice stretched out fast and solid for many miles. When he reached the "Discovery" she had only four hands on board. All else were in camp, ten miles to the north, trying to saw a passage. They had cut a channel 150 yards long, 20 miles from the ship; and this was the result of twelve days' work—the ice being six or seven feet thick. Manifestly this was futile and Scott as soon as he came on the scene ordered the attempt to be abandoned. They must wait on the forces of nature—which in the preceding winter had not freed the "Discovery."

No danger of starvation lay before them; seals and penguins could be killed in any quantity needed, and

there was good supply of other stores. Blubber would give oil for heating. They had therefore no need to count on a relief ship, but its despatch had been anticipated in Scott's report of the previous year. Yet when he and Wilson, camping out on the ice, sat with the tent door open discussing plans for the day, and suddenly a ship entered the field of view, Scott could scarcely believe his eyes. As they were getting ready to march back and report the news, Wilson looked up and said, "Why, there's another." No one could account for the "Morning's" consort.

Soon of course they learnt that the "Morning's" report had gravely perturbed the Societies responsible for the expedition; and time was too short to raise a fund again by public appeal. So the Government was approached. Its answer was that the Admiralty would take over the task, if the "Morning" were handed over to it. But the Admiralty could not afford to risk failure, and so it was decided that two vessels should be sent, and the "Terra Nova," one of the finest whaling ships afloat, was purchased, equipped and sent off. All was done in haste, and even so the start was late if the "Terra Nova" relied on her own steam and sail; so cruiser after cruiser in a long chain took her in tow, till by the end of November she reached the Tasmanian coast, and in December sailed with the "Morning"—carrying this message, that if the "Discovery" could not be freed in time to accompany the relief ships home, she must be abandoned in the ice.

Scott's feelings and those of his companions were anything but pleasant:

By this time we considered ourselves very able to cope with any situation that might arise, and believed that we were quite capable of looking after ourselves. It was not a little trying, therefore, to be offered relief to an extent

which seemed to suggest that we had been reduced to the direst need.

Once again, readers who want to hear the story of this adventure told, must be referred to Scott's narrative—consisting of extracts from his diary. For three weeks there was no sign of hope ; but on January 28th the ship began to stir in her bed. Creaking and groaning timbers were "pleasant music." By the 30th, ice had gone out in huge fields, and the relief ships were within eight miles. Then came stagnation ; the swell which had shifted the ice died away ; and work advanced, necessarily, on the assumption that the "Discovery" must be abandoned. Scientific collections, the library, and the instruments were all transported.

On February 6th began the attempt to speed up matters by lavish use of dynamite. Something was accomplished, but not much. The diary reads :

February 10.—To-day I have done very little but walk restlessly about. . . . Everyone now is making an effort to be cheerful but it is an obvious effort.

Very little is said anywhere ; but throughout these tense and vivid pages we feel implied rather than expressed the passionate feeling of seamen for their ship and the unreasoned repugnance of brave men, tried to the uttermost in danger and hardship, against an order which must carry a sort of humiliation.

It was spared them. On February 14th nature set to work. Here one passage must be quoted to illustrate Scott's power of writing and the imagination which in such moments always widened the significance of the detail that he pictures:

Even by dinner-time we had no definite news.

It was not until we were quietly eating this meal that

the excitement first commenced, when we heard a shout on deck and a voice sang out down the hatchway, " The ships are coming, sir ! "

There was no more dinner, and in one minute we were racing for Hut Point, where a glorious sight met our view. The ice was breaking up right across the strait, and with a rapidity which we had not thought possible. No sooner was one great floe borne away than a dark streak cut its way into the solid sheet that remained and carved out another, to feed the broad stream of pack which was hurrying away to the north-west.

I have never witnessed a more impressive sight ; the sun was low behind us, the surface of the ice-sheet in front was intensely white, and in contrast the distant sea and its forking leads looked almost black. The wind had fallen to a calm, and not a sound disturbed the stillness about us.

Yet in the midst of this peaceful silence was an awful unseen agency rending that great ice-sheet as though it had been naught but the thinnest paper. We knew well by this time the nature of our prison bars ; we had not plodded again and again over those long dreary miles of snow without realizing the formidable strength of the great barrier which held us bound ; we knew that the heaviest battleship would have shattered itself ineffectually against it, and we had seen a million-ton iceberg brought to rest at its edge. For weeks we had been struggling with this mighty obstacle, controlling the most powerful disruptive forces that the intelligence of man has devised, but only to realize more completely the inadequacy of our powers. Even Nature had seemed to pause before such a vast difficulty, and had hitherto delivered her attacks with such sluggish force that we had reasonably doubted her ability to conquer it before the grip of the winter arrested her efforts.

But now without a word, without an effort on our part,

it was all melting away, and we knew that in an hour or two not a vestige of it would be left, and that the open sea would be lapping on the black rocks of Hut Point.

Then follows his story of the race between the two relief ships through the drifting floes, and the final contact when a rope from the "Terra Nova" was actually fast to the "Discovery." Yet she was still icebound and men would not wait for Nature. Charge after charge was fired on the 16th and with the last explosion "her stern rose with a jump, as the keel was freed from the mass of ice which had held it down."

On February 16th, 1904, the "Discovery" came to her own again—the right to ride the high seas.

Within twenty-four hours after that, she had nearly lost it for ever.

Scott wanted more coal, to carry out some further exploration of the coast, and the "Terra Nova" came alongside to hand over what she could spare. Her captain was to dine on board the "Discovery," but as they sat before savoury dishes of seal and penguin, word came down of wind rising. Scott went on deck and his report sent Captain M'Kay back to the "Terra Nova," which instantly steamed for the open. The "Discovery" lay at anchor, but steam was ordered to be got on her; the storm was so fierce that her cables could not be trusted. As she began to move out, a current caught her and she grounded on a shoal; and all signs pointed to her being dashed to pieces.

Yet in a few hours the rising tide floated her off into deep water and they were saved.

The rest need not be followed, further than to say that, as he pushed boldness to the verge of safety in carrying on so far as food supply could possibly hold out, so with a narrow margin of coal he sought for new results in the

west, until there was no choice but to head for his *rendezvous* in the Auckland Islands. On April 1st the little fleet entered Lyttelton Harbour, where New Zealand was like home. On June 8th they sailed again and on September 10th, 1904, the " Discovery " lay at Spithead —two months over three years since she set out.

Her reception was tremendous. Scott at thirty-six years of age found himself a popular hero. It is needless to quote Press commentary at length ; but the *Times* of September 10th gave a long special history of the expedition ; and its leading article had this judicial appraisement :

The expedition commanded by Commander Scott has been one of the most successful that ever ventured into the Polar regions, north or south. True to the spirit of his instructions, he has done what he was sent out to do, and even more. He has added definitely to the map a long and continuous stretch of the coast of the supposed Antarctic continent. His sledge expeditions, south and west and east, have given us a substantial idea of the character of the interior. The geological collections brought home will enable us to read a part at least of the history of this land of desolation. The life of the sea and such scanty life as is to be found on the land apart from the migrating penguins has been thoroughly investigated. The observations in meteorology and terrestrial magnetism, extending over about three years, will probably take as long to work out. These are some of the spoils which this great British expedition has brought back. Apart from their immense value to science, it is not improbable that the meteorological and magnetic work will prove to be of considerable practical importance in human affairs. All this has not been obtained without an endurance of hardships by officers and men of which those who have

not been in like conditions can have no conception. Yet there was only one death in the expedition, a circumstance probably unparalleled in a similar enterprise. Every member of the little company of fifty who sailed three years ago in the "Discovery"—officers, civilians and men—has done his work efficiently and borne his hardships bravely and cheerfully. Moreover probably on no previous expedition has there been such unbroken harmony among its members. The example of "grit" and self-sacrifice in the service of science shown by Commander Scott and his companions will no doubt serve to keep alive amongst us that spirit which has done so much for England's greatness in the past. In commenting on the very partial success of the German Antarctic Expedition, and the fact that it was commanded by a scientific man and not a naval officer, a well-known German general insisted that in such enterprises a certain amount of recklessness, combined with a faculty for intelligent organization, was absolutely essential. It was pointed out that necessary qualifications were well exemplified in the initiator of this great enterprise, Sir Clements Markham, and in its commander, Commander Scott, to whose intelligent, sympathetic and unflinching leadership the complete success which has been achieved is mainly due.

Will the problem of the Antarctic be left where it stands?

Scott was promoted to Captain, as from the day of his return. There was still much to do before his work could be complete. His report to the Lords of the Admiralty had been sent from New Zealand in advance of the slow sailing "Discovery." It began by praising Captain Colbeck of the "Morning." "Although," he added, "our small company were so thoroughly able to take care of themselves and naturally felt some embarrassment at the extent of the relief expedition, I would not have it

appear that we undervalue the services of the relief ships. Everything that could possibly be done for us, they were willing to do."

Then he went on to speak of his own command. To print the earlier part of his report would be mere repetition of what is told in his book ; but at the close it went into general observations of a confidential nature, and it emphasized the hardships even of the homeward voyage from the ice to civilization:[1]

On polar expeditions there must always be times when all must work for the common good, regardless of departments ; at such times there has been no need to ask for volunteers in the " Discovery." On the sledges, or on the snow, in coaling or watering the ship, or at any task that needed to be done hurriedly, officers and men have worked alike, and grudged no labour till the work was finished. The conduct of the men has been beyond praise. By them, the monotony of the second winter was met with unfailing cheerfulness. Most arduous sledge journeys and the most severe weather were encountered in the same spirit and with an intelligence that freed the officers from all anxiety as to their welfare. But the qualities of the ship's company have never been more evident than since our release from the ice. The difficulties which might be expected after such a long captivity in the ice were overcome only by incessant labour. It was, in the sailor's expression " Watch and stop on," and though many were almost worn out with fatigue, there was neither complaint nor demur when a fresh task was imposed. I shall hope to make their services better known to you on the return of the expedition.

This report reached London early in May. The

[1] By the kindness of the Admiralty, extracts from these reports, which are among the official records, are now given for the first time.

official comments begin with those of the Hydrographer Royal, Rear-Admiral Sir W. J. Wharton :

Commander Scott and his staff have most magnificently maintained the high standard of the efficiency of former polar expeditions. I presume that steps will be taken about medals. W. J. W. 13-5-04.

The First Sea Lord, Lord Walter Kerr, noted :

Concur with the hydrographer—an interesting report of excellent work done and modestly described by Captain Scott who deserves every credit as do also all those associated with him in the expedition. W. J. K. 21-5-04.

The last word was from the First Lord, Lord Selborne:

I cordially agree. S. 25-5-04.

Scott's first step on his return concerned his own movements. His letter to the First Sea Lord asking for leave to carry out the literary side of his task is characteristic both of the man and of the service to which he belonged:

80, Royal Hospital Road, S.W.
Sept. 21st.

Dear Lord Walter Kerr

I take the liberty of writing directly to you, being in some difficulty.

My employers [1] wish me to undertake a narrative of our voyage, to be published in the spring ; they have also arranged for a lecture to be given in November with the Prince of Wales in the chair. In addition the geographical societies and other persons of large towns are anxious for a repetition of the lecture.

[1] The Royal Geographical Society.

The difficulty of the book lies in arriving at the best condensation of a large amount of material, and the lectures might help in indicating what was of interest to the public.

But I have no wish whatever to advertise myself. I should be very sorry to do anything that the Admiralty or the service at large thought unbecoming a naval officer. Except in this matter I have mentioned, I am trying to keep as quiet as possible. Of course it is a little difficult at present. My hope has always been to report myself ready for regular work within 6 months. My wish therefore is to know whether I should have the Admiralty's approval in undertaking the narrative and certain lectures in large towns to be limited at my discretion.

Again apologizing for troubling you,

I remain

Yours sincerely

R. F. Scott.

Lord Walter Kerr wrote to Lord Selborne to say that the Admiralty raised no objection, and that he would tell Captain Scott so. But he added :

For his own sake and that of his future, in the Service I hope he may be available for Naval service, as apart from geographical, after six months.

However, a longer period proved necessary, as was indeed inevitable. The lecture tour was a distasteful duty. Scott endured tortures of nervousness, having the intimate conviction that he would be a failure. His valour did not run on those lines.

Meanwhile there were other duties to discharge. On September 25th, he reported that the men lent to the " Discovery " would be paid off on September 30th. He asked for two months' leave for each, and that Lieu-

tenants Royds, Skelton and Mulock might get six months' leave of absence on full pay to complete the reports of their scientific work, and Lieutenant Barne three months for his record of tides and soundings.

It was so agreed—Scott himself getting six months' leave.

On October 17th, writing from 1 Savile Row, the headquarters of the National Antarctic Expedition, he sent in a recommendation for "some substantial reward" for the warrant officers and men who had been lent to the expedition.

It is to be observed (he said), and the men are fully aware, that they have lost much by their long absence from the regular service. The men are prepared to do their utmost to regain the lost ground, but I would submit that my Lords should be pleased to direct that they should have every facility which is conformable with the efficiency of the service in qualifying for such gunnery or torpedo ratings as they may wish to obtain.

Then, after some technical detail, he gave full expression to his sense of what the men deserved:

I feel that it is most difficult to place before my Lords in its true light the exemplary behaviour of the officers and men lent to the Expedition.

It is to be remembered that they were not under the Naval Discipline Act, and were perfectly well aware of the feeble application of the merchant shipping laws to their unusual position. If it was by my suggestion, it was by their choice, that the true spirit of naval discipline was observed throughout the voyage and I cannot remember a single instance of a man presuming on the laxity of the law, or acting otherwise than he would, had he been on the decks of a man of war. The same relations were

observed between officers and men as are customary in H.M.'s ships and the same practical obedience to command was invariably given, with perhaps an unusual intelligence in obeying the spirit rather than the letter of an order.

I would protest emphatically that this was not done with the hope of reward, because from the first I pointed out that under the exceptional conditions, a reward was improbable, and because at one time or another, the majority of the men contemplated leaving the Navy at the end of the voyage.

I sincerely believe that the excellent conduct was due to a high sense of duty and that they worked purely for the honour of their ship, their service and their country.

I fear that it would unduly prolong this letter were I to attempt to mention the numerous acts of self-sacrifice and the general cheerfulness under adversity which were displayed both on board the ship and during our sledge journeys, but I cannot conclude my remarks without bringing to the notice of my Lords a proof of the spirit which actuated the men, by calling attention to their excellent behaviour since our return to civilization.

Both in New Zealand and at home they have been fêted, and made much of, and fully exposed to all the temptations which so frequently demoralize men of their class.

It must be considered no small addition to their credit that they have come through such an ordeal unscathed and have preserved their good name to the end.

Where a whole ship's company has acted with such extraordinary zeal and loyalty, it is difficult and almost invidious to mention particular services. I have therefore in the accompanying remarks mentioned only such cases as may appear exceptional in the rewards suggested.

I feel gratified to think that I can without exception recommend to my Lords those officers and men who

served with me in the " Discovery " throughout her two years' imprisonment in the ice.

The first exceptionally chosen names were those of the boatswain T. O. Feather, of the carpenter Wm. Dailey, and of the second engineer Dellbridge. These are sufficiently commended in Scott's published narrative ; and they do not continue in the saga. The same is true of Frank Wild, to whose coolness and resource it was mainly due that a whole party did not perish in a snowstorm when the unhappy Vince was lost. But Edgar Evans and William Lashly, names that recur, were picked out and bracketed together. Scott wrote of them:

These are both men of magnificent physique. They accompanied me on my sledge journey to the interior of Victoria Land. I would remark that I think that journey nearly reached the limit of performance possible under the conditions, in order to point out that it could not have been accomplished had either of these men failed in the smallest degree. Their determination, courage, and patience were often taxed to the utmost, yet I never knew them other than cheerful and respectful. On one occasion Lashly undoubtedly saved our lives by his presence of mind when Evans and I had fallen into a crevasse.

Among the list of recommendations is that Thomas Crean, A.B., should be rated Petty Officer First Class.

A separate letter dealt with the services of the commissioned officers employed:

I cannot recommend too highly, individually or collectively. It will be clear to my Lords that the satisfactory state of discipline and comfort which I have already reported as existing in the " Discovery " could not have

been maintained had not the officers shewn those qualities which secure the confidence of the men.

In their individual tasks they worked without pretension and without parade but with a single honesty of purpose productive of the best results.

I would submit that their conduct besides doing credit to themselves reflects an honour on the service which has trained them.

A leader is known by his judgment of men and his power to induce them to work for him and with one another. These reports show the leader's quality of discerning loyalty to those who served under him.

They show also, what indeed is implicit throughout in Scott, how deeply the religion of his service had entered into his nature. He was never so proud of men as when he saw them of free will accepting all the strictest obligations of discipline ; when he could be sure that they, like himself, acted always " for their ship, their service and their country."

Admiral Markham's comment on the report, sent to him by his cousin Sir Clements, is brief and explicit :

I think he has done splendidly. The more I hear of what he has done, the more do I think he was the right man in the right place. No one could have done better than he did, and he seems to have kept his officers and men well together. He must have a splendid constitution and be as hard as nails.

CHAPTER IV

NAVAL COMMAND AND MARRIAGE

URING the months in which he was engaged upon his book,[1] Scott lived with his mother and sisters in London, refusing the offer of rooms which had been taken for him. His special leave was extended from six months to nine. "I find that with constant application it will be impossible to complete my task before June," he wrote to the Admiralty on March 2nd—asking a similar extension of three months for Lieutenant Mulock.

With his captain's pay, he was now comparatively well able to meet the burdens on him—and it is recorded that for the first time in his life he went to a first-class tailor and was turned out as, in his opinion, a naval officer should be. But his chief concern was for his mother, and she was moved out of lodgings into a house of her own, in Oakley Street. Even on a captain's pay it is not easy to provide for a mother and sisters, and when he went on lecturing tours he was obliged to travel cheap. As he got out of his third-class carriage at one town, he found the platform covered with red carpet and a waiting crowd. The secretary who accompanied him was sent to get a cab and find out who was expected—and came back saying that the Mayor and Corporation were there to meet Captain Scott.

In short he was lionized to the full. In addition to the

[1] *The Voyage of the "Discovery."*

Antarctic Medal which he received in common with all members of the expedition, he was promoted to Companion in the Victorian Order, and in August 1905 was commanded to Balmoral, where he had a very gracious reception which a jolly letter to his mother describes. He wrote from the house of dear friends, Sir George and Lady Baxter: Sir George Baxter was a magnate in Dundee whom he had come to know when the "Discovery" was being built there.

Invereighty
Forfar
Sunday.

My dearest Mother

I must tell you of Balmoral. I arrived there on Tuesday, before dinner I was sent for by the King who gave me the C.V.O. Dinner 3 round tables. I sat at the King's, Prince of Wales, Duke & Duchess of Connaught, P. Arthur, Prime Minister,[1] and two ladies-in-waiting. Concert that night.

Wednesday. Busy all day preparing for lecture. Walked round Castle with Equerries for exercise.

Dinner. Sat at King's table again.

Evening. Gave lecture. King, Prince of Wales, some of Connaughts—Prime Minister, and many others. Intended an hour, but King asked many questions, and ran into $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours. All sorts of nice things said afterwards, none nicer than by Prime Minister who said he regarded himself as Father of the Expedition ! ! ! don't give this away.

Thursday. Went for grouse drive to-day. Prince of Wales [2] instructed me in art and had temerity to remain in next butt—Shot 9 myself, less than most, but more than some.

[1] Mr. (now Lord) Balfour.

[2] The present King George V is one of the best shots in England.

Evening. Dined next but one to King, quiet evening, played billiards, everybody awfully nice about lecture.

Friday. Wet, early afternoon—Spent about an hour showing King photographs, sketches, etc. Walked with H.M. in Park before lunch, sat at his table at lunch, drove out with him in the afternoon to Deer drive, shot a stag—sat next King at dinner: Gillies' ball, long talk with Princess of Wales at Supper,—said goodbye to King, and to bed a little overpowered, kind and considerate as they are. Then the King offered me my stag's head. I have sent you on some Venison he gave me.

Saturday. Started early, all the equerries very nice, came on to my delightful friends here, and feel it nice to rest.

This is just an outline. There are many details to be filled in. I don't think I made any mistake except in not asking for more, but I hate the idea of it. I haven't quite got the hang of matters, but I feel I have left an impression, but I am not of the sort that takes advantage of kindness shown. . . .

Your affect. Son

Con.

A postscript adds :

I never had to wear knee breeches or frock coat.

In addition to this and to other honours at home the Swedish Geographical Society awarded him the " Vega " commemorative medal, the French Government made him Officer of the Legion of Honour, and the Berlin Geographical Society gave him the " Nachtigall " clasp.

It means more perhaps that in these months of his first great celebrity he made friends with Sir James Barrie, of whom he was to write : " I never met a man in my life whom I admired and loved more than you, but I never

could show you how much your friendship meant to me, for you had much to give and I nothing."

Sir James Barrie in his Introduction to *Scott's Last Journey* has made it plain enough how very different that relation seemed to him; but Scott's words, written with dying fingers in the last camp of all, are not to be suspect of insincerity; and they prove decisively how this man of action valued things of the mind. Yet after all, action for him, as for every knight errant, was only the expression of an idea—his service to a vision.

It is true also that the experience of adventure in which he had free right to shape a course in pursuit of his own vision left him somewhat uneasy when he became once more only a part of the great machine to which his life's service was devoted.

The personal adventure rounded itself off when his book was completed.

The Voyage of the "Discovery" was finished in summer; the prefatory word is dated August 28th, 1905. It contains grateful acknowledgments to Mr. Reginald Smith, the leading partner of the publishing house Smith, Elder & Co., who had helped much in the literary work. As will be seen, Scott's publisher became his devoted and most trusted friend and adviser. The book from the first took its place among the masterpieces of the literature of travel; its popularity has been steady and continuous throughout nearly a quarter of an eventful century.

Before it was published Scott had returned to duty, remaining on half pay till he was appointed, on January 15th, 1906, to a temporary staff position as Assistant Director of Naval Intelligence at the Admiralty. His special task here was to consider the whole question of trade-routes in war, and to lay plans for the provision of extra defence by armed merchantmen. In August 1906 he went to sea, posted to the "Victorious"; and on

the following January 1st was transferred to the "Albemarle."

Under his command both these ships reached a high degree of efficiency. For instance there is a naval signal among his papers showing that in a flag competition of six ships the "Albemarle" completed and won five trials —no other ship winning more than one. Scott was then flag captain to Sir George Egerton, and a farewell note to Egerton from Vice-Admiral Curzon Howe says that "the general conduct of H.M.S. 'Albemarle' while carrying your flag reflects the greatest credit on your Flag Captain and staff." A personal note from Admiral Howe to Scott has these words :

It has been a very great pleasure to me to have known and served with you. I shall watch your career with the truest interest.

None the less there had been in that period of his service a great anxiety for Scott—perhaps the greatest that can come to a naval officer. While he commanded the "Albemarle," during the manœuvres of February 13, 1907, she was in collision with another ship of the fleet.

Here is his own story of the event :

H.M.S. "Albemarle"
Atlantic Fleet
Gibraltar
February 15th.

My dearest Mother

I 'm afraid you must have been dreadfully alarmed when you first read of our collision but I sent you a wire as soon as possible on arrival here.

We had a very bad night on the 11th and came within an ace of an appalling catastrophe. The story is long,

dreadfully technical and complicated, but I will try to give you an idea of it.

We were a fleet of eight ships you know, preparing to take part in a manœuvre exercise which was to commence at 8 P.M.

During daylight the Commander-in-Chief formed us in a single line which I can only show diagrammatically. . . .

0 " King Edward."
400 yds.
0 " Hibernia."
0 " N. Zealand."
220.
0 " Africa."
0 " Albemarle."
0 " Commonwealth."
0 " Britannia."
0 " Hindustan."

Now for my experience:—I went on deck at ten minutes to eight, first to the after bridge to see the wireless telegraphy office was in order and then to the fore bridge. Our station at this time was pretty good, the night was black and a heavy sea running but one could see the lights of the other ships clearly. Soon after eight the Fleet increased speed and I remained up until the signal had been executed, then I left the ship in the hands of the officer of the watch, knowing that the Navigating Commander was also on the Bridge. I went aft to get the cipher signals concerning the enemy which were made at this time ; of course we were much interested to know these. I deciphered these myself and took them straight to the Admiral (Egerton), but whilst in his cabin I felt that the engines had stopped suddenly and the next moment that they were going astern. I seized my cap and dashed for the deck and the first thing I saw was the huge bulk

of the "Commonwealth" close on our bow. A glance showed that collision was inevitable and I reached the top of the turret as we struck. It was a sickening sensation —no hard shock, for of course these huge ships cannot be brought up dead, they must go on, and so one felt only a jarring drag as though a colossal brake had been put on, but one knew well what shattering must be taking place in one or other of us. Then the ships swung together and the "Commonwealth" forged ahead so that the next shock brought our foremost casemate against her quarter; then we were pulled clear by our engines. By this time I had reached the fore bridge and so took command and stopped our engines. Everything was very quiet. We realized that we ourselves could not be very badly injured but of course the first thing was to discover our own damage. I sent Fisher down and he soon returned with a favourable report. Then there was nothing but to stand by and prepare to assist the "Commonwealth." It was pitchy black but her lights were close to us outlining the huge hull, and as she rose and fell with the sea and one saw the twinkling lights and the illuminated figures on her decks, she represented a picture of helplessness and a possibility of catastrophe which is not easily forgotten. It was perhaps some half hour before she reported that there was no danger of sinking. By midnight we were all under way again steaming 12 knots to the South, at daylight we parted from the Fleet and continuing at the same speed reached this place about four P.M. on the 13th.

Now to explain how the accident came about. It appears that the ships remained more or less in station and there was nothing to cause anxiety until 8.12 P.M., four minutes after I had left the deck. Then one of the ships in front swung to starboard until her green side light became visible—this meant that she must be at least four points off her course. The next ship to us

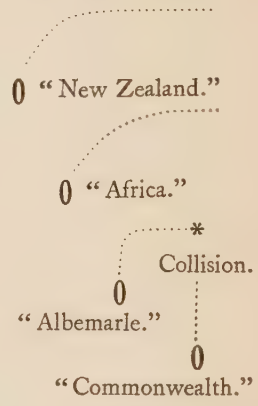
the " Africa " saw this in time and swung off to starboard in the same way. Then came our turn and our navigator, the coolest and most excellent officer, took charge of the ship directly and swung the ship off by a prompt act which alone saved us from colliding with the " Africa." . . . To show how quickly everyone must act at such times it is only sufficient to say that we struck at 8.17 only five minutes after that fatal green light showed ahead of us.

Now as to blame for all this—it is well distributed.

* * *

We know nothing of the cause of the " New Zealand " swinging off, but there can be no apparent reason for such a swing and of course it was the first cause of the disaster—the green light makes it certain that she did swing and she did not signal on her syren.

The " Africa " had to follow suit but she did not signal.



Our navigator had to follow suit—though this act was the immediate cause of the collision it is quite clear that he would have been into the " Africa " had he not put his helm over—the one thing he did not do was to signal on his syren, but neither of the other ships had done so and it is doubtful whether anyone called on to act so promptly would have remembered to do so.

* * * * *

Now as regards myself, I was quite justified in leaving the ship in charge of the officer of the watch, knowing that a highly experienced navigator was on the bridge ; but it is arguable that the moment I chose for going below would have been more wisely deferred until after the ships had settled down from a change of speed. Further-

more it is only since the accident that the full dangers of the formation and the circumstances under which we were placed in it, have become evident to me. I won't deny that if I had realized these as fully as I do now, I should not have left the bridge.

You see the whole case is very complicated.

There will be a court of enquiry of course but I have some doubt if there will be a court martial because it will be difficult to decide who to court martial. I should not wonder if the thing ends in an Admiralty memorandum censuring all round. For this we must wait and see.

I ought to have written yesterday but as you can imagine there has been a great deal to do.

We are not badly damaged and to-night we leave for Lagos again, but when we return they will take our repairs in hand and it may take three weeks to put us quite right.

The " Commonwealth " is a much more serious case. She has a large hole under water where our ram went in and she is bulged in opposite some cabins where our casemate struck her. She also has a hole above water forward. The estimate for her repair is about three months.

And now, my dear, I must end. I will write from Lagos and tell you how the matter shapes itself, but you see there is really no cause for anxiety as far as I am concerned.

Your loving son

Con.

The nature of the mischance is clear from this account. The Battle Fleet were being exercised in close formation, in several columns, with the minimum of lights showing, and proceeding at ten knots. Station keeping in these circumstances, and perhaps particularly in the formation ordered, was an extremely difficult matter, with the result that the bows of the " Albemarle " and " Common-

wealth " collided. No lives were lost, and the structural damage was not considerable. A thorough investigation by Court of Enquiry was held, and in the upshot the Board of Admiralty, so far from censuring everybody all round, censured nobody, but decided that the accident should be regarded as due to the risks incidental to operations of this nature, which have to be taken to give the Fleet practical training to fit it for war conditions. The exoneration of the Captain of the " Albemarle " was thus complete.

On leaving the " Albemarle " in the end of August 1907, Scott went on half pay, and was with his family in London.

It was in the nature of things that such a man should some day fall in love so strenuously as to alter materially the whole shape of his life ; and that is the next adventure which has to be recorded.

Early in 1907, while spending a short leave in London, he was at a luncheon party where another guest was Miss Kathleen Bruce, youngest daughter of Canon Lloyd Bruce of York. She was then known as an artist of promise, who had studied sculpture for five years in the Paris schools. He and she barely exchanged greetings, but took note of each other. At the close of that year, he was again in London, she was again asked to meet him. They walked home together, for she also lived in Chelsea; her studio was at the end of Cheyne Walk ; and from that time on it is possible to follow Scott's movements continuously, for scarcely a day passed without his writing to her, till they married.

The letters which follow will make plain how strangely assorted was this alliance. Scott was thirty-nine, and family responsibilities had made him painfully aware for others of the inconveniences attending upon lack of money ; the artist was thirteen years younger, and in-

different to those inconveniences. His profession, like the sister service, stamps men, at all events superficially, with a conventional pattern ; and her outlook on conventions had been formed by five years of the Latin quarter. Her associates belonged to the artistic world, in which he was a stranger. Yet it is plain that the same instinct which drew him so powerfully to the company of a great writer, drew him also, not merely to the woman, but to the artist who was to hold her own in her own branch of art with the best workers of her day. However conventional Scott might be, however much the typical naval officer, he formed his chosen companionships among unconventional brains.

There was, however, this likeness in their unlikeness. Both had the passion for strenuous adventure ; and by the time when they came to know each other, Scott was already projecting a new expedition. Sir James Barrie says that not only he but all who tried the experience came back vowing that nothing in heaven or earth would tempt them to go near polar regions again ; and at the end of six months they were on their knees to whoever might be able to get them there.

By the end of 1907, Scott was already deeply involved in projects for motor sledges—as will appear from the letters. But the first thing to note is that by the end of 1907 he knew his own wishes very definitely about marriage ; and something of this must have been guessed by his mother, for she wrote to him on New Year's Eve :

56 Oakley Street
Chelsea Embankment.

My own dear Con

This is to wish you the very best of good things in the coming year and all happiness and success to you in *all* your undertakings.

I also want to say that *whatever* plans you make for

the future will be suitable for me, and you must never let me be a hindrance in any way to your making a home and a life of your own.

With every wish and prayer for your happiness and that God will bless and prosper you my best of Sons.

Ever believe in the love of

Your devoted Mother,

H. Scott.

You have carried the burden of the family since 1894, it is time now for you to think of yourself and your future.

God bless and keep you.

It was not easy for him, being what he was, to accept this view ; and he put the case with characteristic clearness to the other person chiefly concerned—having two days earlier forwarded his mother's letter to her.

To Miss Kathleen Bruce,

56, Oakley Street
5.1.08.

I want to marry you very badly, but it is absurd to pretend I can do so without facing a great difficulty and risking a great deal for others as well as myself.

If I was very young I should probably take all risks and probably win through.

I am still young enough to believe we could win through, but in facing poverty we should be living and believing in a better future. The old can only live in the present. My mother is 67—only a strand of life remains. She has had a hard life in many respects. I set myself to make the last years free from anxiety. I can't light-heartedly think of events that may disturb my decision.

Since my return[1] I have always said that worry was to be put aside, and half in joke I added that if I married I would look out that the young lady had lots of money. In the uncertainty of life it is stupid to make promises, and though my mother would freely absolve me I cannot quite forgive myself.

But all this is only what you know, that things are difficult. If you care enough however we can put things right—I am convinced of that ; but it can only be if you care enough, and heaven knows when I think of your future I don't want to force you to face a life of poverty.

When you say we are " horribly different," it perhaps means that you would not now act with caution as I do. But if you really believe and think we are horribly different in all our ideas and thoughts, why of course it would make things impossible. I don't think this a bit ; if I did I should not want to marry you.

If you care, be patient and we 'll pull things straight, but you must work with me and not against me. But I should be a poor thing indeed if I didn't give you freedom to annul the bargain whenever you feel that it cannot make for your happiness. You won't have to face heroics or troubles of any sort when you decide.

It had been settled that Mrs. Scott and her daughters should move to the country, and a house had been found for them at Henley. He was posted to the " Essex," a battleship of the Channel Fleet, on January 25th, 1908.

The extracts from his letters which follow show amongst other things the preoccupations of a most zealous naval officer. Whatever his work, he flung himself into it with passion, and the happy gift for

[1] From the Antarctic.

communicating his own interest in every detail prompted him always to set down a picture of whatever was in hand.

But meanwhile the projects for exploration were always active. Lord Howard de Walden had been induced to finance the experiment of motor sledges and these were nearly ready to be tried out among Alpine snows, in the mountains of Savoy.

The letters to Miss Bruce resume:

23.1.08
56, Oakley Street.

I have got my appointment for the "Essex" at Portsmouth, from Saturday next. Rather rushing things. I shall be round in the morning but only for a few minutes, the evening is mine. A long day at Henley but satisfactory on the whole.

H.M.S. "Essex"
7.2.08
Spithead.

I got back last night, and we came out of harbour this morning—we lie half way between Southsea and the Isle of Wight. We go to sea on Monday; on the 11th, 12th, 13th we shall be about Berry Head near Torquay, at night having mimic attacks made by destroyers. On the 14th we go to Swanage alone, the rest of the fleet distributed, the whole working out wireless telegraphy problems. On the 18th we shall be running torpedoes, on the 19th, 20th, 21st doing gunnery exercises. On the 22nd we get back to Portsmouth. I hope and trust I shall get away by the 25th at the very latest, then a dash to town to fetch Lord Howard and off to Lautaret [in Savoy]. I shall want to see you

badly, and if I can get up on the 24th (say), perhaps it will be possible, but there is a doubt.

Do you know I 'm next senior to the Admiral[1] in our fleet, so that I take charge not only of my ship but of a division of our small fleet—isn't it amusing ? Forgive just this little outlined sketch of our plans to-night. I have only just got our programme and must write a score of letters.

H.M.S. " Essex "
Swanage
15.2.08.

We have achieved some peace ; such a rush for the last few days. Wait at Torbay—night attacks by destroyers—a weird scene—then a dash to the Isle of Wight, 20 knots with three cruisers, to catch the " Adriatic "—caught her in mid-channel—rushed for Cherbourg with my three cruisers about her, much to the pleasure of the admiral—back to Torbay—more cruiser tactics—then another night attack last night. I have scarcely left the bridge, but now is peace.

I would like to tell you of the past week, and oh there are so very many things to tell ; but now I must catch the morning post, and my thought is all of the fact that we are at peace and shall be till Wednesday, and close by there stands a sweet little town under chalk cliffs. Why are you not there on shore, at the hotel or a lodging ? Why cannot you come ? Be my guest on shore. Send me a wire. Swanage is but four hours from London, and the downs—we could walk over them, and I so want you to see the ship and catch a glimpse of this life of mine. Bring W—— [a girl friend].

[1] The armoured cruiser "Essex" belonged to the Portsmouth Division of the Home Fleet. This Division was commanded by Rear-Admiral A. M. Farquhar, C.V.O., with his flag in the battleship "Prince George."

H.M.S. " Essex "
20.2.08.

A long day to-day—firing torpedoes and then some technical exercises with very ragged ranks—a very near thing to a collision once. We are calmly at anchor to-night, but I am off to bed to dream.

H.M.S. " Essex "
Sunday.

I have been looking at poverty here as represented by those who live on pay alone. I don't find it attractive to them. I don't believe it would be attractive to you or me—lodgings—ceaseless gossip of appointments—what will this or that person do next ?—constant change. I grow a little despondent, but perhaps that is only to-night, for I am tired too having done much to-day —this is quite a large ship and of course I have very palatial apartments (lately occupied by the Duke of Connaught) so the furniture is good too. I am going to start a mess of my own and live on board in solitary state. I will be lonely I expect, but I see outlets for work and some peace.

In March, we pick up again the Antarctic thread which runs through the story.

The sledges had been constructed on Scott's design, which for the first time introduced the principle of wheels running in a flexible band, so that the machine could climb over obstacles caterpillar fashion. Given ample resources, and nothing to do but perfect it by repeated trials, its inventor might have brought the idea to the point of practical application at which his machines would have succeeded. He had neither the money nor the leisure for these complete developments. The motors did more for him than he hoped even in this

tentative stage, though nothing decisive. But they were the beginning of those tanks, which helped so greatly to break up the long-impregnable German lines.

Further, answer had been given to the question put in the *Times* leader : " Will the Antarctic problem be left as it stands?" A new expedition had been launched in 1907, under Scott's companion, Ernest Shackleton, aiming to reach the South Pole. The news of its arrival in the Antarctic now came in, and showed that Shackleton's programme had been changed. He had agreed with Scott that a new base for his sledge journey should be chosen, and consequently the announcement that he was again established in McMurdo Sound proved disconcerting, as will be seen by the letters which follow.

Scott had chosen Skelton, the engineer officer who had accompanied the " Discovery," for a technical assistant in the sledge trials.

Hotel Continental
Paris
March 7th, 1908.

We arrived last night—Hamilton [1] rushed things at the end—couldn't start. The engine also packed hastily and inefficiently. We had to have the engine at the Usines de Dion at Puteaux. We got there and found damage, put that right, then found Hamilton had been trying to run the engine the wrong (reverse) way, so that quite a problem is before us. Imagine a wild little Frenchman dashing us to and fro Paris all night. " No trouble too much. No sleep required—but we must have food (*Charbon*) to keep going, and for *les ouvriers*." So to and fro to the Cafés, 6 miles, and back to wrestle with nuts and spanners. At 3.30 A.M. we got away, at

[1] The man in charge of the motor sledges—rather a thorn to an impatient experimenter.

10 we joined Charcot,[1] and our little "Coursier" who had not been to bed. More dashing about in company with the de Dion trolley, but this time from the San Lazare to Gare de Lyon. At 2 P.M. the train started with all the sledges loaded on a special truck, then *déjeuner*, and since, some hours just walking about. We do not start for Lautaret till Tuesday night. The goods train with sledges will be slow. We reach our Hotel at about 5 or 6 P.M. on Wednesday. The address will be Hotel Bonnâbel.

Now a more serious part. You will have read the *Daily Mail* of Saturday giving the account of Shackleton's doings. He has landed close to my winter quarters. . . . The result to me is most important for it makes it definitely impossible to do anything till he is heard of again. These are far consequences. I won't discuss them now, but you can guess something of my thoughts. I shall of course get this sledge business as nearly right as can be, and then I really don't know.

Lautaret
13th March, 1908.

Here we are—arrived Grenoble late 10.30 A.M. Wednesday—then to Bourg d'Oisons by light railway. Such heat in the carriage !—dreadful headache, to bed with open windows, thank heaven. Such a splendid day to-day. To Fresnay, mounting, mounting by carriage, then on and still up by sledge, but more of that—the glory of it—new snow peaks opening to view at each turn of the road. What can a card say more except that I missed you ?

The trials, up near the Mont St. Bernard monastery,

[1] Dr. Jean Charcot had made a voyage of exploration in the Antarctic in 1903-4 and was now projecting his second journey in the "Pourquoi Pas," which explored the coast Graham's Land in 1908-10.

were encouraging; Charcot accompanied. A monument at Lautaret still commemorates this episode—one of many proofs that all Europe bore Scott and his comrades good will.

H.M.S. "Essex"
2.4.08.

I 'm writing in the middle of the night—as we steam for Portland. We should have been there by now, but for a very shocking accident. We were going along without lights in single line at 10 to-night with destroyers attacking us out of the darkness, when one unfortunate destroyer the "Tiger" ran foul of our sister ship the "Berwick." We were brought up in a heap, inky blackness about and lights suddenly flaring out, search rays all on a pitiable central object, the sinking destroyer —she vanished before boats could reach her. I am afraid several lives were lost. So far we have only counted 22 saved from all the winking signals, and the crew must have been nearly 40.

H.M.S. "Essex"
5.4.08.

Our story is wind, wind, wind. It has been blowing continually and exasperatingly. My temper being consequently short I fell deliberately foul of the captain of the —— he 's a bit of a charlatan—the matter is technical and has to do with the organization of the fleet for night defence. In a loud voiced manner he has been worrying our poor old admiral and adding grey hairs to his head, so I felt I must take the opposite side and prove him wrong, which has been my occupation this Sabbath day.

Yesterday I walked to Weymouth with another Captain—a nice little man—on returning he said—"I

rather wonder you took the 'Essex.'" I replied that it suited my plans—"That 's all right" said he, "but you lose £100 a year."

My dear, was there ever such a casual idiot as I?—until that moment I never knew that I was receiving £720 a year instead of the £830 or whatever it was I told you—I begin to think that if I 'd appointed a secretary to look after my private affairs since I returned, I could have paid him a good salary and have been richer. I do just hate this money difficulty.—To-morrow we start firing again but owing to the "Tiger" disaster we are not to have our night-search for the "Dreadnought," for which I 'm extremely sorry for I 'd taken quite a lot of trouble to work out my plan for capturing her.

Incidentally this brought me in touch with an excellent but rather abstruse work on cruiser subjects—I find I ought to have known more of this and other confidential books,—so now I have plunged deep into them to find a real mine of interest—just faintly I see new stepping stones.

H.M.S. "Essex"
18.4.08.

A programme has developed for the fleet. We shall be out of dock about the 7th May, and at once we must plunge into gunnery exercises. These will keep us busy—very busy—throughout the weeks of May and June, and on June 22nd we assemble in the North Sea for a month's manœuvring. This is very rough, and I will send you exact dates. The main point is that I shall be tied after the 7th except for week-ends, and about the middle of May even the week-ends will finish. I had not calculated on the month of manœuvring, and, well—it 's no good grumbling. After Wednesday next I shall certainly go to London, if not asked to

Farnham.[1] It will be necessary to restart the sledge matters.

H.M.S. "Essex"
Sunday
19.4.08.

This is a little note to meet and greet you in London. If you 've not done so on the instant, take pen and paper and write to your devoted man.

Here is our programme with more definition.

8th	May.*		Weekend free.
11	,,		Gunnery practice off the Nore. At 6 P.M. proceed to Teignmouth.
12	,,		Lay down rangers for light quick firing gun tests.
15	,,		Test to be completed by evening.
16	,,	*	Arrive Spithead and give leave.
20	,,		Leave for the Nore to carry out practices for heavy gun tests.
10	June.		Commence heavy gun tests.
19	,,		H.G. tests to be completed.
20	,,	*	Arrive Spithead. Coal, provision, etc. Prepare to mobilise.
25	,,		Mobilise at the Nore with whole of the Home fleet.

* These are the only times when I can hope to get away. I am very depressed to think that I shall see so little of you, but when I can come I must be always with you. Do you understand, these are clear orders. Good-bye, take care of yourself, and you are *not* to go without lunch again. I must be getting ready to mount my bicycle and trundle to the country where the spring is

[1] Sir James Barrie had a house there and Miss Bruce was to be of the party.

in the air.—Oh but I must have a day with you in the country.

CON.

H.M.S. "Essex"
Thursday, 7.5.08.

I 've news, bad and good. First for the ship. You know we are here to test our "light-quick-firing-gun-layers" (that 's something for you to remember). If you want explanation, it means this. A ship carries comparatively small guns to repel attacks by torpedo craft. We carry eight twelve-pounders, three three-pounders for the purpose. Each of these guns has its appointed gun-layer who is supposed to shoot straight. In order to test him, on a certain day a small square of red canvas, 8 ft. by 10 ft., is set up on a raft. The ship steams past it at 12 knots and 1000 yards' distance, and the gun layer is given 55 seconds to make as many holes in the canvas as he can. With a fixed test like this there naturally results great competition between gun and gun, between ship and ship, and finally between fleet and fleet. Hence the gun layers are prepared for their task by all sorts of instruction with instruments, then with sub-calibre ammunition, and then with practice ammunition. Finally great care is taken to choose the day of the test. It must not be blowing or raining, the sea must be comparatively calm and the light good. In our English climate it isn't always easy to find these conditions, and therefore with an eye to success one waits with some patience for their arrival—and so again to my story. We are here to carry out this test, and are now awaiting our opportunity, but the weather is not promising to-day. We arrived off Teignmouth very early on Tuesday, and laid our targets. Wednesday proved very fine and two ships, the "Prince George" and "Argonaut," completed their test and went back

to Portsmouth. We had hopes of doing the same to-day, but this morning came a gale from the S.S.E. and I had to anchor in Brixham roads to get shelter. This afternoon, wind and rain have dropped, but there is still a heavy swell setting into the bay. This evening at 6 we are going out to the target again, and if all is well we shall have a try for our test to-morrow at 6 in the morning, but the weather is not settled and therefore there is every possibility of another postponement, and if Saturday is no better, we must stay here over the weekend.

Now do you see why I have written this long rigmarole? It just means that I shall not see you on Sunday unless you are brave enough to come to Torquay for the week-end. I do so much want to see you before you go away. I don't know what I shall do unless I can. Will you come? Will you come?

Up to this time, Scott's engagement to Miss Bruce was only an understanding between them; it had never been announced, and the uncertainty, added to his sense of responsibility, made much trouble in his mind. There is no reason to withhold the expression of it, for much is told by it of the man, and nothing that is not worthy of him. There are many letters that reflect the bright side of happy courtship—but one or two that reflect the side of anxieties throw most light on character.

H.M.S. "Essex"
11.5.08.

I am sad to-night. It *is* difficult to know what to do, and all the time I am conscious of bringing unhappiness to you—disappointment in me I think, though your sweet generosity wouldn't admit it. Kathleen, don't let your happiness be troubled. Sometimes when all the obstacles loom large, I wonder for the future; but always, always,

I know that to take away that happy smile of yours would be the most dreadful thing in the world. Then fancy mounts for a gallop, and it seems that I have already sorely troubled the serenity of your life, and banished some of its sweetness. Don't let me be a trouble to you.

Yet oh my dear, there is another side of me, born of hereditary instinct of caution, and fostered by the circumstances which have made the struggle for existence an especially hard one for me. Can you understand? I review a past—a real fight—from an almost desperate position to the bare right to live as my fellows. Is it strange that I should hate to look at all the consequences of a fresh struggle? I know, as you will think, that this should be no attitude for the man determined to conquer. But, my dear, what I know, and you do not, is our service, with its machine-like accuracy and limitations. It offers place and power, but never a money prize—so that it must be poverty always.

I am a coward to write like this, but it is late and I have been thinking much. You are the only woman to whom I can tell things. I try to tell you and somehow it is comparatively easy. Will you see in the midst of my despondency that I tell you of my sadder thoughts of the difficulties before us, as well as of the love I feel for you, and the longing I have that you should be always near me?

And now goodnight. Give me of your patience.

H.M.S. "Essex"
25.5.08.

This very instant night I have been offered a new appointment and accepted. The ship is the "Bulwark," first-class battleship. She is now flagship to the Admiral of the Nore division of the whole fleet. (Nore being Sheerness Estuary of the Medway.) But in a few weeks the "Lord Nelson" relieves the "Bulwark," and the

latter then becomes what is called a "private ship": that is, a separate command in the Channel Fleet. From a service point of view this is a very good appointment. I shall be the most junior captain in separate command of a battleship. For the rest, £100 a year will really come this time, and I shall be on the £832 scale or whatever the sum was we discussed.

I change ships on Saturday next at Margate. Not much time lost.

CON.

Meanwhile his lady had gone on a random pilgrimage to Italy, and with a comrade was camping out in unashamed vagrancy. He wrote to her from the "Essex" on May 26th, calling her "vagabond":

What a sweet name you 've given yourself! How I long to be with you in the olive and pine woods and in sight of the blue Mediterranean. What delight! and my cheery little swimmer.

H.M.S. "Essex"
Portsmouth
May 22, '08.

Did I make myself quite clear as to your not hurrying? We stay here till the 27th and then journey east till we come abreast of Margate. There we labour with diligence in preparing for our heavy gun-layers test. Do you remember what I told you of the light gun test? If so, you will imagine something in the nature of a repetition of the practices I described, but the issue is naturally more important with the heavier ordinance. By the way, I didn't tell you that we had quite a small triumph with the light guns on the occasion when I hurried everything in the hopes of seeing you. Our

score should place us in the first flight.[1] This is rather off the point which was to describe our movements. Although we shall be off Margate, I doubt if there will be any chance of getting away till the test is over. It will begin on June 10th and will be completed by the 13th. You will see how free that leaves you to perambulate the plains of Italy.

I 've just had notice of another gold medal to be sent from Berlin.[2] There was a pressing invitation to go and receive it, but of course that was impossible, besides without a word of German I should be a little lost.

To-day the sun shines gloriously and I go to play golf. A long tramp over green carpets with daisies, buttercups and bluebells pressed under foot. I know the place and love it, even to the searching for lost balls in the golden scented gorse. Why aren't you here, or why doesn't my last green run on to the yellow sands and blue seas by which you wander ? I can imagine myself so happily tramping by your side, opening chest and lungs to the free air of heaven, or pausing by cool streams or a warm sea to bathe ourselves.

Bless you, bless you, bless you. When I am healthy and open-aired, everything seems simple and easy of accomplishment.

H.M.S. " Essex "
May 26th, '08.

Knock a few conventional shackles off me, you find as great a vagabond as you, but perhaps that won't do. I shall never fit in my round hole. The part of a machine has got to fit—yet how I hate it sometimes. Oh, by

[1] One of the entries in the official record of Scott's career may be quoted here from the Admiralty record:

1908. Materially contributed to satisfactory (G) practice results in H.M.S. "Essex." Their Lordships' appreciation expressed.

[2] The Nachtigall medal.

nature I think I must be a free lance. Amongst uncertainties this is certain—I love the open air, the trees, the fields and the seas, the open spaces of life and thought. You are the spirit of all this to me, though we have loved each other in crowded places. I want you to be with me when the sun shines free of fog.

When this reaches you I shall no longer belong to the "Essex." I go to the "Bulwark" on Saturday, after which my address will be H.M.S. "Bulwark," Home Fleet. I cannot get news of the "Lord Nelson." It affects me because the "Bulwark" will bear an Admiral's flag till the "Lord Nelson" is ready. I don't want the time to be too long, as I cherish independence[1] also, and the "Bulwark" passes to the Channel Fleet as a separate command. . . .

From the naval officer we pass back to the man who was so terribly sensitive to the sight of suffering:

Undated.

I have just heard something that is extraordinarily sad, and I am sure you will understand why I don't come to see you just this very evening.

This is the circumstance. I have a cousin in New Zealand who married a delightful lady; both were my friends but she especially. She was the first to greet me on return to civilization, and together we went many a ramble. A year ago the New Zealand doctors discovered cancer in her jaw—they said the only chance was Europe and an operation—they thought and told her she might not survive the voyage. Indomitable courage brought her to London, to all appearances in splendid health. Then followed a horrible and disfiguring operation, but she was pronounced out of danger, the disease

[1] The captain of a ship with an admiral on board is less independent than one without.

eradicated. Since, there have been months of physical pain and minor troubles, borne wonderfully, and through all the suspicion never mentioned. Lately the pains have brought her back to London and her Surgeons, and now she knows they were not due to neuralgia. The Surgeon gives no hope, the disease is deep in eye and brain. She told me all this to-day without a falter, only mentioning the difficulty of conveying the news to New Zealand. She takes this last fighting chance, a physician with medicinal remedy, then a flight to New Zealand in hopes of seeing husband and people.

Dear, this woman is in health and strength full of vitality and the joy of living.

Do you see I can't come this evening?

Goodnight, I will come to you very soon.

CON.

Another note of this month, undated, recalls that the sledges were still under review:

Hill House
Belstead
Ipswich
Sunday.

We have a motor trial to-morrow morning. I shall reach London about 3.30 and get home about 4.30, and come on to you. I long to see you.

CON.

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
Monday 1st, 6.08.

GIRL, VAGABOND,

Are you back? Is it this Monday or next? Never a date is there on your dear postcard, and such a dearth of news. Oh robber, when you owe so much!

But please, miss, why should I write for such poor doles of response? I am busy, very very busy from 6.30 when I rise to 11.30 when I seek my bed. You can imagine how much is to be done—new ship, new officers, new men, and such quantities of all. I like the Admiral, he is young, vigorous, and a kindly gentleman withal, not great at all but bound to reach the top. We have made a clear start for a clear understanding, and should do well together. Two and a half months is likely to be the term of our association, then we shall prepare to become a unit of another fleet.

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
Friday night
3.6.08.

Do you realize that you will have to change me, change me, infuse something of the joyous pure spirit within you? A year or two hence it would have been too late. I should have been too set to admit the principle of change. It is something that I acknowledge my shortcomings! But Oh dear me what a task you have before you.

All this because you have met Isadora Duncan, and I see you half worshipful, wholly and beautifully alive, and I love you for it. Here 's the antithesis of all that 's worldly and conventional. I know this, I say to myself over and over, I love this—but oh the grinding effects of a mechanical existence—in the end, I am half fearful. Shall I satisfy you?

Keep, oh keep, all you think of the beauty of life—of the wonder of its renewal.

We have been very hard at work. For me, learning and teaching—a little, with philosophy. I find it a great fact, this enormous fleet with its wonderful collective organization and underneath its myriad individual interests. I have dined to-night with the Commander-

in-Chief.[1] A fine type of gentleman in appearance and character. Here on board I like my Admiral.[2] He is fortune's favourite, born to rank, pushed by rank to every point of war experience ; yet nervously restless and energetic, and so commanding respect. Still more, a gentleman right through, but with limitations, oh dear, yes. I stand as corrective to some. The long and short is, we shall go on in good amity, I think.

To-night it is very late, we are coaling ship. My cabin is closed. I am going to a lofty spot to sleep in the open. Somewhere in the early hours we shall finish.

What a stupid letter, but the thought of you is wonderful to me. I 'll just do something with my life yet, because there 'll be a little lady supremely interested.

God bless you,

Con.

4.6.08
H.M.S. " Bulwark."

Indeed, indeed I am busy here. You can't think what a lot there is to do. Why, I scarcely know. Of course one could drift into this, doing little, and there is little encouragement when more changes impend ; yet somehow one wants to be master of the whole situation. There are things that please, and others that displease me, it 's a mix up. I know and perhaps have a little pride in the knowledge that in circumstances of this sort I earn my pay.

In this month, it was definitely settled that the engagement should be announced, and that marriage should follow as soon as the obligations of service allowed.

[1] Vice-Admiral Sir Francis Bridgeman, K.C.V.O., then Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet.

[2] Rear-Admiral the Hon. Stanley Colville, C.B., C.V.O.

The letters to Miss Bruce go on, naval affairs and personal affairs all intermixed:

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
12.7.08.

I meant to write you a long letter to-night. I thought of a peaceful evening, but first comes the Admiral with the schemes of the forthcoming manœuvres. He 's good in that way, tells me all the secrets,—so to-night we have been hours at strategical movements in the North Sea—charts, compasses, rules of the game, calculations and plans, can you imagine it all? Later, I 've had to gather in the threads of many reports, and write a summary on—let me be precise, "The protection it is considered necessary to provide for the guns' crews of the anti-torpedo boat Armament in the ships under your command, both from the weather and from the interference from the rays of searchlights."—Sounds interesting, doesn't it?

And I just keep thinking of you as I turn each page of rubbish.

On Monday we start a cruise. I made the programme out to-day. There will be no rest for anyone from 6.30 A.M. to 9 or 10 P.M. till Thursday night when we get back again. I 've dozens and dozens of letters (of congratulation) to answer. Heaven only knows when I shall be able to do so.

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
Queen's Ferry
Sunday, July 12th.

I have written to Barrie at once. I feel guilty, also I am in trouble elsewhere. Now really I 've wanted to write to everyone, but it 's dreadfully difficult, and, you little witch, I don't believe you appreciate for a moment how busy I am. Allow me to give you an instance.

To-morrow I shall have to rise at 3.30. I shall be on deck most of the day. I have at least 2 hours paper work to wedge in at night. We shall anchor late, and the next day be off early again.

There are five admirals in this huge fleet, four besides my own. On Tuesday I dined with No. 1, Thursday with No. 2, Friday No. 3, Saturday No. 4. Thus for my evenings of the past week. This is the first free one, and, as I say, I have to be up at 3.30 to-morrow. To-day is Sunday, the day of rest. I was up bothering about papers (it 's a huge business the paper work of the fleet) at an early hour ; 9.30 Divisions—inspection of the ship ; 10.30 inspection of the men ; 11.0 Church —read lessons ; 11.45 arranging sweeping operations ; 12.30 lunch—a party ; 2.30 tactical discussions with my Admiral (he buried his uncle yesterday, so I had to take his place on the council of war) ; 4.0 further tactical discussions with the chief of the war college ; 5.0 writing letters amidst innumerable disturbances from signals.

On top of all this, forsooth, you wonder why I don't make arrangements and write letters. . . .

I am extremely frightened at your lawyer with his " settlements," " Life Insurance," " provisions " etc., and you sent it on without a word.

As to the house, I haven't heard anything further, but Rathbone's (the vendor's) lawyer isn't likely to be in such a hurry as you. Of course I 'll write directly I hear more, and also I 'll finish the business as soon as possible you may be sure, so that those itching little fingers may get to work.

The post just goes, so goodbye for a few hours.

Bless you,

Con.

The house was 174 Buckingham Palace Road (recently pulled down), which was to be the home of Scott's

married life, and, for many years after his death, of his widow and his child.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
Burnt Island
July 17, 1908.

We received orders to pay off, and re-commission on the 18th August at Chatham, leave to be given beforehand. This would mean returning south by the 6th. But the Admiral expostulated at the ship being taken from him before the " Lord Nelson " is ready (end of September). The Commander-in-chief has therefore urgently requested that the ship may remain. You see how indefinite that leaves matters. One small blow—a new crew for the " Bulwark " is to come from Devonport. That means that when the ship needs a refit she will be sent to that port. It 's annoying on account of the relative difficulty of getting to London, but of course leave is not only given when we refit. I shall hope to get away from other places.

But as to our day of days, when is it to be ? If we come south in August, we might manage then.

I will tell you so soon as I can get hold of more definite news. It 's quite difficult to remember sometimes how strange all these naval uncertainties must be to you. The " Bulwark " goes to the Channel Fleet when commissioned. She goes then on the fleet programme, which is not yet decided, but the probability is, some months at Portland, then Christmas leave. I could probably get special leave for a fortnight or so at any time at Portland for such an important episode as marriage. There is another interval for leave which may come soon, and may be delayed until December when we go to Devonport. This is in connection with some special dockyard work to be done on the ship.

To-day I am conscious that I am writing stupidly all

the time, but really I have been very hard at work without even the night hours free, but things go pretty well with the work. Yesterday I lectured before three distinguished Admirals and all my officers on the manœuvres, an odd hour wedged in a long day. I want to be thought an expert, and am getting measurably that way—and, girl, I 'm really good to stick to things like this, because again and again I am tempted to let my thoughts fly off to London. Luckily when I do fly that way, it 's to brace me with the knowledge that you wish me to be up and doing, and not only to love you, but to conquer the world with you. . . .

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
25.7.08.

Great news. We come south at the end of this week. We re-commission on the 18th, after all for service in the Channel. I am sorry for the Admiral and sorry to lose him, but I 'm rather, rather glad to be going to see you so soon.

Not a word more to-night. We have just arrived from the sea. To-morrow I 'll tell you all about it.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
26.7.08
Saturday.

A little more common sense to-night but not much. The ship will leave for the south on Saturday. We shall get to Chatham on Monday night, August 3rd, I hope. We have to give manœuvring leave to our men then turn them all out, then get a fresh lot on the 18th. I am trying to keep the officers and have been writing all about for that purpose. I am also writing urgently to get some alterations made in the ship. If these are taken in hand, we may remain at Chatham till some date between the 20th and 30th. Then we

go to Portland to join the Channel Fleet. I have written for a programme of the Fleet's movements. It might be possible to get away from Portland to be married in September, but the first certain date is December, when the ships return to their ports to give Christmas leave. We will soon be discussing all this, but the things to be decided are what time we want for a honeymoon, and where, all things considered, we can best fit it in. The Admiral is very sorry to leave the ship, and I sorry to lose him in one way, but I shall be glad to be on my own, independently king of the vessel that carries me.

What lots and lots of things there are to tell you.

First, "our solicitor" (it does sound grand) has been suggesting provisos to be added to the agreement about 174.

I think it is a great point to have the house in our hands and furnished, so that we can marry and occupy as we think fit.—What fun, our house.

Such a dear note from Mabel Beardsley, also from Mrs. Hogarth, dearer still from old Sir C. Markham, who is *charmed* with you. Admiral Markham writes nicely, but I am more pleased with a charming letter from my Mrs. Reginald Smith, who says just the nicest things in the nicest way and longs to see you.

I did like your philosophy. It's true and oh so good for me to reflect on the exaggeration of evils and all the pains we suffer from anticipation.

CON.

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
Queen's Ferry
27.7.08.

I'm a little frightened vaguely. You are so uncommon and I conventionalized.

What does it all mean? I am afraid of what I shall

be to you. Shall I be always trusted ? Will it come natural to you to tell me things, intimate things, or will you grow to think me only fitted for the outer courtyard of your heart ?—Will you come to see the limitations and be impatient of them, or worse, learn to tolerate with easy indifference.

I am stupidly anxious to-night. I see the beautiful things you strive for, I see your glowing independence of thought. I know you are impatient of the great mass which lives by rule, and ever eager to appeal to nature and individual right,—but oh dear me, how will it all sort with the disciplined, precedent-seeking education of a naval officer ? Do you understand a little our naval machine ? from midshipman to admiral cast in a mould to make part of a whole, so that many a fine thought or quality is condemned because it doesn't fit —is not interdependent.

And the machine grinds on with wonderful efficiency because it is unyielding, and, like nature itself, atrophies the limbs for which it has no use, however great their beauty.

Do you ever admit there are things whose cause is so remote and involved that the truth of them must be accepted on faith, or will you hold that all truths are self-evident ? Oh dear heart, how many many aspects there are to a single subject.

Well, you must try to be long-suffering with me. With all your might keep before you the conditions that have made me what I am, and be merciful in expectation.

So I send you back your enclosure.[1] I see the beauty of it, yet it is for you, not for me. Will many things be for one and not for the other ?

Here I see the level ; it is the dreamer, the enthusiast,

[1] A photograph of Isadora Duncan dancing.

the idealist. I was something of each once, and now it gives me the feeling of growing old ! All has been so suppressed in me ; and yet, in remembering, I know that a hard life limited by practical fact was the only thing for me. The dreaming part of me was and is a failure.

Do you see in all this the shadow of a train of thought, and the shadow of sadness which it has brought to me ? I want you to be near my soul, and I pause to wonder if I have a soul that such a freethinking creature as you could ever find companionable.

But, girl, this will never do, for your letter is full of joy and gladness and can't be answered as I have begun. The distrust is all for myself, remember.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
28.7.08.

There is an important thing I wish to say. I want you to consider your trousseau. " Stupid man," you 'll say. Yes I know, but I want you to consider it from my point of view—you will otherwise be denying yourself lots of things for poverty's sake. The serious consideration is that when we are married you mustn't only look nice (which you can't help), but you must look as though there was not any poverty. You may say, humbug, but just let me put it this way too. You 've admired my clothes ; and just think of my feelings when I am so to speak " expensively " dressed, whilst your costume shows a saving spirit. It won't do for the present, will it ? Now does your sweetness see ? Kathleen, am I dreadfully sensitive to appearances ?—but you will understand, won't you ?

This is a theme that occurs through these letters : and it shows a real suffering—partly because of a sen-

sitiveness which he did not approve. "I can cover myself with ridicule for the thought," he writes, "but there are moments when it 's horrid to know that Mrs. Scott cannot drive her carriage."

But behind this was the practical anxiety of an ambitious man. He wrote again :

I want my mother to be happy and comfortable, and yet I know that *we* must keep up some small state for the sake of my career. That is just the whole rub. We 'll do it, too.

They did.

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
30.7.08.

Such a dull dinner party to-night. Sometimes on such occasions I get depressed with the thought of a long inevitable vista of such functions. Oh dear me I am oppressed with a leaden feeling. I see full stomachs, torpid brains.

I 've a letter from the C.O.S. (which is Chief of Staff of the Channel Fleet). He says : "Our movements are really quite unsettled, but I think we shall go north to the East coast of Scotland about the middle of September after battle practice, returning to Portland (say) in 6 weeks, and then we shall, I suppose, be more or less there until about February or March."—These words tell you all I know of my work after August 20th or thereabouts, but I think the "Bulwark" is pretty certain to be at Devonport for a fortnight or three weeks in December.

Then come two letters which illustrate a trait of the seaman. Scott thought it the duty of a naval officer to be as smart as his means allowed, and even with

nothing but his captain's pay he was, as he said, " so to speak ' expensively ' dressed." That was for the sake of the service. But for his own personal pride, he must spend money on his ship. Before marriage, and after marriage, when he was living with the utmost frugality in other ways, he spent in proportion to his means lavishly, on his ship and for the credit of his ship. So we find him enlisting his lady's talent:

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
Sunday night.

I 've got a small piece of work for you. We want a crest for the " Bulwark," a design from which castings can be made to form badges for the boats. Hitherto they have carried a flag, the usual sign of an Admiral ship. Now we become a private ship, we must have something that is apropos. The name isn't easy to fix. I am enclosing the sheet with notes, and you 've just got to rack your pretty head, and suggest a design when I come to see you, then make it in clay. What 's the use of marrying a sculptor if she doesn't do such things ?

The design must (1) Convey an idea, quaintly or otherwise suggestive of the ship's name ; (2) it must be simple so that it can be distinguished at a considerable distance.

Do you see the " requirements " ?

Bulwark is a word of Scandinavian origin and signifies a rampart or something of that nature. It has come to signify protection and safety in modern language.

It doesn't seem there is much choice, but to adopt something that carries the meaning of the name, a something that is a play upon the word, as is so often the case in herald's crests—a plain B is rather hackneyed.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
17.8.08
Chatham.

It is true that the ship is to be completed by the 9th but after the completion there is ammunition to be got in as well as coal. We cannot well finish everything till the 15th. I have written out a programme and sent it to my new Commander-in-Chief [Lord Charles[1]]. If, as I anticipate, they don't hurry us to leave Sheerness before the 15th I think I can manage leave till the 14th. Honeymoon then at least nine days.

Now, finally, herewith two little sketches for the boat badges. Poor child, fancy worrying you with such things, but our boats look very bare without badges, and it 's really quite an important part of our preparation for the new commission.

The badge was made and a sketch of it will be found on the title-page of this book. By August 15 Admiral Colville had transferred his flag to the " Magnificent " and wrote :

It has been a very great pleasure to me having you as flag captain. From a selfish point of view I sincerely wish you were staying on with me but can well understand your wishes to be your own Boss ; but I trust that we may yet some day be in the same Fleet again.

Matters were still uncertain as to the ship's movements ; but Scott at last got leave in September, was married, took his bride to Etretat for a few days by the sea, and then rejoined the " Bulwark."

The wedding was at Hampton Court, where Miss Bruce's nearest relation, her mother's sister, had rooms.

[1] Lord Charles Beresford, then Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet.

She was Mrs. Thomson, widow of the Archbishop of York. The wedding party went into the chapel in brilliant sunshine. As the service went on the sky darkened, and there were three violent claps of thunder, coming at dramatic moments in the ritual. Then the sky cleared again. Old Admiral Sir Lewis Beaumont said as they came out : "Gad, what a salute from heaven."

CHAPTER V

LETTERS FROM ON BOARD SHIP

HE marriage was for the first few months a regular sailor's marriage, with frequent separations ; and because Scott had the power of expressing himself, we are able to follow the effort of this masterful nature to adjust itself to another personality. The effort was constant because he was sensitive and romantic and an idealist, and could be content with nothing short of a complete comradeship in marriage. To show the man as he was, nothing is more characteristic of him than this series of letters to a woman thirteen years younger than himself, whom none the less he treated as his equal comrade—whom indeed he regarded as his superior, because her mind had been formed in the companionship of those that he looked up to from a distance. He wanted to learn ; and this was no mock humility, because, as will be seen, when he felt himself on his own ground, and capable to criticize, he was not slow to express dissent from her opinions—and even imperious dissent. But the essence of the matter was that he desired to enter into her life ; not merely to be pleased when she was praised for a success in her work, but to make his enjoyment one of understanding.

This was a fair exchange, for it lay at the base of their attraction for each other that she on her part shared and entered enthusiastically into his schemes. The Navy at large evidently—and naturally—concluded, when the

marriage was announced, that this meant an end of polar exploration for "Scottie" (it was so the service knew him). One of the earliest letters (dated 9th Octr. 1908) to his wife from shipboard has this passage :

I am sending you a very quaint wedding present of skins. It comes from one of the nicest of naval officers. There is something most amusingly barbaric and uncommon about it.

It is evident that Scott's answer to the sender—now Admiral Sir Douglas Nicholson, K.C.B.—explained that he and his wife had "read the riddle" of matrimony by deciding that each should give full freedom to the development of the other's ambitions. Clearly also it explained that Scott did not feel that the ordinary naval career would satisfy his desires. So at all events it seems natural to read between the lines of the answer which came from Captain Nicholson—as he then was :

The Castle
Bude Haven
North Cornwall
7 Nov. '08.

My dear old Scottie,

Your letter has just reached me—I don't think there 's any reason for you to growl at yourself for not writing to me when I married.

There is that about R. F. S. which carries a certainty of the steadfastness of his friendship which needs no emblazonment in letters.

Nevertheless I am happy in this one of yours. If it came to a judgement as to who was the real villain in the matter of not writing, it would be me who would receive sentence, for I never wrote you a line when your

relief ship went out to you—a most disgustingly disagreeable omission.

Talking about relief ships, I hereby withdraw my assumption that you 're finished with the Antarctic, and quite know that the " reading of the riddle " given by you and Mrs. Robert is the correct one.

There wasn't any blarney in my letter or my remarks about your Antarctic book and proceedings. I only truthfully told you of the light in which I see them.

I am not surprised at your criticism of the great fleet existence, I suppose it is the fate of all of us, but I 'm sure I don't look forward to it at all. I am not likely to get a ship yet, and hope to be left in peace and to go through the next year's war course.

Ever yours,
D. R. L. Nicholson.

Very glad you approved of the rug.

It must be remembered accordingly, when this series of letters to his wife is read, that throughout all their other preoccupations a new and greater Antarctic adventure was at the back of Scott's mind and of his wife's.

To his Wife

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
29.8.08.

What a lovely letter.

The Wardroom mess man, our lodging house person, came and said he had rebuffed railway people who had tried to seize on your trunk, but the trusty Clement [his steward] put things right and forwarded the box to you. I *am* so sorry I didn't think of this before. How very stupid of me. What a husband to possess !

We went to sea this morning and ran about firing at targets. Things improve, but what a lot of time might

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CATERPILLAR SLEDGE, DESIGNED FOR USE IN THE ANTARCTIC BY CAPTAIN SCOTT, ON TRIAL AT FEFOR, NORWAY, WITH CAPTAIN SCOTT (×) MR. BERNARD DAY AND MRS. SCOTT

be spent in practising. This afternoon I made an inspection of holes and corners, and had to find much fault. Then followed consultations on curves of speed, etc.,—some small drills and other matters,—a long day, nothing very tangible to show, and yet complete occupation from 8 A.M. to 10 P.M. A ship is a curiously exacting possession, and I have only a few minutes to devote to a far dearer one.

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
Devonport
Monday, 6.10.08.

I have been doing quite a lot, mainly in the ship to pull things straight. To-day started only with ship work, but in the afternoon I went to see Outlands, the old home. It was looking very charming and old-fashioned, and our tenant, a linen draper hailing from Belfast, met me with many smiles and a conscious satisfaction with his own care as custodian of the property. Some two years ago I met him very openly on terms, a little doubting the result; but it has turned out well, he has done more than I expected.

I have manufactured more thunder-bolts for Shaw,[1] and shall soon have that matter temporarily off my hands. Hodgson[2] dined with me to-night. We have been talking incessantly. Shaw and his sins with rising indignation: the geology of the expedition with regrets and hopes of amendment. Then a good deal of interesting talk on the sex discussion at the British Association. He says much was highly technical, hinging on chromosomes. In the larger dealing with facts deciding sex, the theories of nutrition were largely discounted,

[1] Sir W. N. Shaw, Director of the Meteorological Office, who had questioned some of the "Discovery's" records.

[2] Biologist on the "Discovery" expedition.

and there was much to prove the absence of influence of the embryo by the physical or mental condition of the mother. Hereditary tendencies were considered to play a very large part, and then (and this is much supported by stock-breeders) the dates with reference to the periodical tribulations of the female. All this would have interested you greatly.

I am reading Acton's essays, it 's a wonderfully subtle mind.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
9.10.08.

I 've polished off the Shaw letter. I think it ought to bring him to his bearings. I 'll send you a copy. It 's been a nuisance as each word may have to be justified.

We left Plymouth early on Tuesday. That evening we were in a dense fog off the Land's End. It 's always trying, creeping from fog signal to fog signal with the plaintive hoots of steamers drowning their shriller note. At 10 we burst into the Irish Sea, and through the night plunged on through thinning banks of mist. In the morning we found the land half hidden in cloud, and at noon we were anchored in Berehaven. Wild signals from coast-guard stations, trying to supply our wants, but owning that the keys of the calibrating hut were in possession of a person who might be anywhere on this exceedingly rocky coast. In the afternoon we were off again up the long bay with steam-boats puffing along beside us. Half way up, these were dropped to secure targets, break into the hut, and generally prepare for our work. The ship went on till mooring buoys close to Glengariff were found. To these we moored head and stern, and all was ready to start work this morning. But the night brought reports of falling barometer and

rising wind, and the morning heavy rains, a louring sky and increasing squalls. These over the sheltering land gave little trouble, but prevented the accomplishment of our purpose. As the day wore on, the elements of risk crept into our position, and soon after five the wind suddenly shifted and came with terrific force from the open sea. The risk suddenly glared ; the ship straining heavily at her cable, the sea dashing past and breaking in mountains of foam on the rocks a few hundred yards behind, and the wind roaring through the rigging. Steam ordered on the instant, but an hour and a half to wait. Meanwhile, two steam-boats to be hoisted in. As darkness fell, the ship showed a glare of lights, steam was reported ready and with infinite care we slipped our cable and clawed her clear of the mooring buoys. Five minutes later we breathed a sigh of relief as we plunged headlong to seaward. In an hour more we came abreast of Berehaven, turned in at the entrance and as we quietly anchored in smooth water the clouds broke, the moon shone forth and the last of the storm swept by. Now as I write all is so calm and placid on board that it is impossible to realise the trouble of four hours ago, yet with glass I can see the forlorn outline of a collier ashore on the reef at the harbour's mouth, and the seas are breaking high over her funnel. Is this a glimpse of the life of a sailor ? " They that go down to the sea in ships." How curious it all is—to live on the verge of mischance.

And so enough of me and my doings, except that this is why I haven't written before, and so a little telegram goes with it in the morning.

It will be but a very short silence, for there is more, much more to be said ; and it 's so good to think that I can write and write again, and yet there remains an exhaustless stock of " things to be said."

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
Bantry
Sunday, 11.10.08.

We are now at anchor inside Whiddy Island, two or three miles from the town and two or three from our Glengariff Range.

Bantry is the end of the railway that stretches from Cork to the wild Western Hills. A long peninsula thrusts itself into the Atlantic, between Bantry and Kenmare to the North. Off the end of this peninsula is Bere Island, which curls round and forms a fine harbour; that is Berehaven, and the post takes five hours to reach it by jaunting car from Bantry. Now you will begin to see why I 'm near the latter place to-night. I 'm becoming ridiculously dependent on the post, and please remember that it 's delightful in such exile to get echoes of the Metropolis, apart from the joy of being reminded of the possession of a wife.

I can't recount any such interesting events as going to a Barrie play. Is it really a bad play ? You must explain why when we meet. Are you judging its literary effects or the failure of presenting real people ?

The play was *What Every Woman Knows*—and out of it grew a contention between her, who was for the men of the younger generation, and him who was a true bred Victorian of the last period, whose most typical voices in literature are Barrie and Kipling. He writes again about another play, *The Sway Boat* by Wilfred Coleby, because his lady had compared it with Barrie's—not to Barrie's advantage :

And I haven't said about the play. There my attitudes are a little antagonistic, not to the play—it must have been good and you enjoyed it, that 's good, but at

the comparison I quarrel. Don't grow to think a play can't live without a sex problem. The mind of man grows heartily sick of too great a stress on this subject—it 's the women I believe who keep it in so foremost a place. But granting all its alleged realistic excellence —educational and otherwise—leave room for the million other interests with which the world teems. If fanciful things are ephemeral, what of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* ? No, don't compare, it isn't wise, I can't see a few modern playwrights held up as philosophers of the ages—Don't be narrowly enthusiastic, girl—Enough. Forgive my criticism, because really I do love you very much and truly, and I want to show you how much as times goes on.

Manifestly, she hit back.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
30.10.08.

If my criticisms are always to produce such an outburst, they must be continued, because I rather love it. I see the defensive quills erect upon my dearest porcupine, and I acknowledge in you a quality of logic which you deny to me. Your torrential remarks follow with well-ordered sequel,—but give in ? *never.*

I haven't seen Barrie's play, but in a way I realize not only the plot but the experiences from which he evolved it. He 's at fault to account for the success of the blatant self-sufficient, self-assertive person of every-day life. He sees many an ignorant man, who by saying " I 'm quite sure " is carried on the top of the wave of prosperity. How in a reasoning, albeit a bewildered, community can such things be ? Of course there is a power behind the throne,—out of sight, supplying the deeper thought, the touch of reality which blatancy advertises. If we are optimists, we can't think success

comes without reason. So grows the pretty idea of the good fairy. Could there be a better term than "Funny-bone" to describe her?[1]

Of course she is as fanciful as Titania. Bottom was a leader in village councils—I won't take advantage of the only excuse you suggest because I know, or think I know something of the workings of Barrie's mind, and as for the other play, your description is very attractive. I am quite sure it must be a very clever and instructive play of its kind, and as to Lena Ashwell's acting there couldn't be a doubt.

Now who 's holding up a few modern playwrights, eh? To be honest there 's a "hark back" in this suggestion to a memory—I oughtn't to have bottled it. A long while ago you dined with the Barries; you described the conversation and mentioned names (three I think) that had been mentioned as representing the foremost thought of the country. Two names I remember, Wells and Granville Barker. "The only hopes of England" was the expression.—I ought to have told you how often I have pondered over the state of mind which could give utterance to such a dictum. In cogitating the activities of this country I will own to confusion in the remembrance of such assertion—and this confusion I think was responsible for the suggestion of narrow enthusiasm.

Of course I 've read your "crossed out" remarks—they 're very correctly expressed "truisms" and I understand them very fairly well for a male creature. Only understand my contention also. Men with infinitely varied and specialized activities must demand robuster idols than the author of *Waste*.

Dear, rightly considered, do you see what your

[1] It will be remembered that the charming young Scotswoman' played by Miss Hilda Trevelyan, married a raucous politician and made him succeed even as a humorist.

original remarks on your theatre experiences have achieved—this ventilation of a little grievance. You won't insist on telling me " nuffin never more " will you ?

Do you remember I warned you that secretiveness was strongly developed in me—it 's for you to break it down, do you see how you do it ? Make all the criticisms " out "—and so between us let there grow the best and surest understanding—Don't let me unjustly think my wife has quaint ideas on this or that point, and therefore these must be avoided—Don't. I 'm not illogical you know, I 'm really not—I can be very tolerant too. The difficulty always is to be tolerant of intolerance and that is the necessity for a smooth life.

I 've been having a tremendous shake up of the ship —all round—we 'll be very good before we 've done— The man with the broken leg is going on well—We picked up a boat at sea to-day—bottom up, hinting a tale of sea disaster I 'm afraid a real one, but we can't trace our find yet.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
31.10.08
(probably from Weymouth).

I have been golfing to-day on top of the downs. A hill close by was carved and moulded by pre-historic marauders. The Romans completed and occupied the camp, and there it is and must be till countless generations have passed. A grim rectilinear figure amidst rolling contours. What a monument.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
1.11.08.

All is quiet here, but we progress. Bit by bit we grow to better understanding to a stronger mutual confidence and so to ordered efficiency. We shall be a man-of-war

soon, which is as much as to say a boy will grow into a man ; but the point is to spell Man in capital letters.

I have been golfing of a Sunday too—I and two lieutenants and two midshipmen, away over the hills, a desperate climb on bicycles ; but, oh, it 's good to get on top and breathe free air in spite of my suggestion of its doubtful health-giving properties. In spite of chemists, it gives fine thoughts, and what more can be wanted ?

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
4.11.08.

Ships are arriving to-night one after another. Creeping out of the fog and into the harbour ; glare of lights ; the Harbour is becoming like a small town and peace has departed.

I hear Shaw has mysteriously become sick. I have much applause for the opening of the campaign and more weapons are forging.

Lord Charles[1] comes about midnight, so the aerial waves inform us. The ships have evidently been doing full-power trials, hence their intermittent arrival.

I have had to report a midshipman to the C. in C. for lying freely which worries me. You don't know him.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
11.11.08.

We 've been coaling to-day, and the black particles of carbon are everywhere still—and I love you—and we did very well. Very well indeed for so newly commissioned a ship. I ought to explain that taking in coal is very seriously considered because of its importance in war, and the average number of tons taken in per hour is one of the pegs on which the reputation of a ship hangs—so it 's good to do well.

[1] Beresford.

The captain made a speech to the men, and then went on shore and played 48 holes at golf, whilst every other soul in the ship either shovelled coal or wheeled it round in trucks, which shows the captain has the best of it; but it 's really the right way though it sounds odd,—but the captain is going to sleep well.

I think the spare bedroom ought to be furnished. Yes I do, Miss Economy. We needn't use it often but sometimes, and it would be a joy to offer the Wilsons harbourage as you proposed. So do furnish the room and do ask the Wilsons [1] to stay till their house is ready, and do just tell me what it all comes to. In such cases as this it 's worth it. It is, isn't it ?

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
13.11.08.

I have been racing to-day, but alas there 's no cup for you. I wanted a strong wind, and left the ship in good hopes, got a splendid start and shot away from everything of my class. All went well on the first round, the course was twice round. I gained 16 minutes on the first boat which had started 28 minutes ahead, and lay third with nobody threatening behind me. Then suddenly the wind dropped, and I used sad and bad language as the light boats ahead increased the lead, and one or two heavily sailed boats crept up behind. At the end, but too late, the breeze freshened again and I finished fourth. Luckily the only boat that passed me was our own commander's. He sailed his boat excellently well but I should have beaten him if the wind had held. Is this all Greek to you ? You will remember all sorts of boats of different sizes being in the ship ; imagine then a race, including all of many ships. They must be handicapped for size and this is done by sending

[1] Wilson was his Antarctic comrade.

them off in classes at time intervals. In this way the total competitors, as to-day, number about 50, but these go over the starting line in clusters, consisting each of a size or class of boat. My class was the galleys and gigs of Admirals and Captains, and I finished miles ahead of all, but three boats of other classes finished ahead of me, so I can't get a cup. Still it was very good fun, and the "Bulwark" takes very exceptional honours in getting the second and fourth place. I rather think we might have legitimately disqualified the 1st and 3rd boats, but we shan't press that. Oh, the "Bulwark" is going to do quite well in the Fleet, things are quite pointing that way.

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
14.11.08.

The days when letters come are nice livable days, the others are poor passages of existence; but I had such a letter from Bill Wilson this morning, and he told me you had been sweet to him, and then—but I must send it to you when you are good and I feel you deserve to be flattered.

Lord C. is reported ill. I hope it's not bad. They say he is a good deal shaken by all these recent battles. Somehow all about him seems to suggest an end of activity. Already I miss in the fleet the consciousness that high authority is interested in detail; that's bad for efficiency. In point of fact, the Commander in Chief can never know half that goes on in a great fleet, but the art of a great command is to create and preserve that impression of the all pervading scrutiny—Privately, I should be pleased with a nearer approach to the ideal in our case.

This ought to catch you on Monday morning before you set sail for Clifton—What sail? All the best frocks and family jewels and the discreet maid? Child, if you

don't write, I shall think you are unhappy because I can't give you all these things.—There, isn't that a threat?

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
Channel Fleet
28.11.08.

Michael[1] came looking the picture of health and good condition—he was full of enthusiasm for the cause but alas! poor chap, there was little to tell him—he will however write to you the week after next and ask you to fix a day to take him out to see the motor sledge at Finchley. I don't know if you take him or he takes you, but you'll go, won't you? And you'll like Michael, he's a simple devoted soul. The silly boy came the whole way to Portland from Northampton to stay one night and vanish the next—he's full of business shifting his mother and their belongings to a new home.

We had a satisfactory day to-day firing. It's the last before the battle practice on Monday—I have hopes we shall do moderately well—Yards have come from Shaw, and a long letter from Geikie trying to hush all up. I shall be busy on it—but shall not hush up *unsatisfied*.

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
Channel Fleet
2.12.08.

I've been to a sailors' dance to-night—only for ten minutes—on shore—you'd have been much amused—and were asked—Here's the programme: I rushed off to write and I haven't written to you and now it's one o'clock.

There came a wild alarm about landing, with multitude of papers; at first reported for to-morrow, but really

[1] This was Lieutenant Barne of the "Discovery."

Dec. 8th. On that day it appears that the C. in C. will marshal innumerable sailors to the attack of the fort on the top of Portland, whilst your husband in command of companies of infantry, 4 field guns and 8 maxims will repel him—Rather fun.

The next suggests that the defender of the fort made use of craft to make its garrison seem larger than it was:

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
Channel Fleet
8.12.08.

The wind blew furiously but we had a great day to-day —all went very well—My dummies caused considerable amusement, but of course the area of operations was so limited that the attacking force saw through them very quickly—they came on, brave but breathless fellows, under a withering fire stormed the redoubt and the dummies— then we issued forth on our sortie, nearly capturing the Captain of the " Africa " (Levison !). Then we all descended the hill and marched past the C. in C. who was full of pleasant smiles, altogether quite a pleasant day.

We coal to-morrow so I shall go on shore and play golf—Did I tell you there were quite interesting Austrian folk at the dinner last night ? They came this morning and the young ladies were so pleased with your good man that they invited themselves to tea—but alas the wind blew tempestuously and the party didn't come off.

I 'm a slow thinker—what news for you ! It 's an increasing joy to have your work before my eyes.[1] There 's something so astonishingly fine about your work, such truth and vigour, that you must go on. The development of such work *mustn't* be lost—and now, as I think on, my pen must suggest that you must

[1] A statuette which stood on his table.

not turn your art or your thought in it to money getting —You must do such work with a pure aim at the beautiful and true and no thought of sordid gain—Do you see, our circumstances and my forebodings have a little turned your thought in that direction—Well, it mustn't go on. Really we are all right. I can go on earning enough—But your art is really too good to be spoiled or influenced by the suggestion of motives of gain— I 'm not very clear, but you 'll extract a meaning.

Strange, isn't it? that I never really guessed the close likeness of your man [1]—it 's wonderfully true in spirit, and now to me each touch is significant. But the man oughtn't to be going to tea parties if he 's *that*.

The next letter deals with the suggestion of a staff appointment at the Admiralty under Admiral Bridgeman, 2nd Sea Lord, conveyed through a friend, now Admiral Mark Kerr.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
Channel Fleet
30.11.08.

Battle practice is over and we 've made a bad failure. I don't know how it happened—we 've worked hard enough in preparation, we went out with high hope, the day was extraordinarily propitious, we started right and everything on deck was right, but somewhere in the centre of the vessel confusion grew and resulted in inaccurate shooting. It 's a sad pity, poor Gibbs is in despair, and really I feel rather down about it—It 's such a nuisance to make a failure and I know perfectly well that Gibbs is a real good man in spite of this set back—So I 'm not going to write the long letter I promised because it wouldn't be cheerful.

[1] The likeness was to Gilbert Cannan, then in the freshness of his youth.

Your letter has just come, *only just* come although it was post marked 28th London, but then there were bits of stamp all over the outside and only a halfpenny stamp —and so I suppose this is punishment for an attempt to defraud the revenue—I think all things considered, I 'd be inclined to accept the offer made through Mark Kerr—My time will be in by Feb. ? The pros are—I should be at head quarters, ready to pick and choose in the future. I should be in London, able to see to the sledge business etc., I should be with a small lady I love —Oh ! you 'll say that oughtn't to count, but of course it must. The cons are certain points in sea service experience.

From a naval point of view the thing would be good enough, and from a private one eminently desirable ! Well, but it 's too late I suppose. If so, don't worry ; I am very well as I am. If not too late, you may tell Mark Kerr that I 'll take the job.

Goodnight,

C.

Yes I think it would be wise to accept.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
15.12.08.

A long letter from Bridgeman[1] to-day. I enclose it and the rough draft of my reply. You had better return both so that I may keep them on record. As you see Bridgeman's wish is to make the billet conformable with my " dignity " ! I 've accepted on that condition, but my opinion is that it won't come off. Bridgeman doesn't know the Admiralty or Administrative work ; *entre nous*, I don't think he is strong enough to carry the change through. If he does, that is if he *starts*

[1] Admiral Bridgeman was on the point of joining the Admiralty as second Sea Lord and wished to secure Scott as Naval Assistant to him.

me with the proper authority, I can manage the rest, and I shall know that I have a stronger man than I expected behind me.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
1.1.09.

I 've a long letter from Hamilton. He says the motor engine is " on its way." I seem to know the expression as the last trench of the dilatory.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
Channel Fleet
3.1.09.

I went to Admirals and people to call this afternoon, then to some old young Misses Morrison—The elder, Miss Madeline, told my fortune by palm—She said *inter alia* : You are confusing sometimes one idea—at times extremely indolent—you have stuck to things with pertinacity and yet at times slackened off from mere ennui—you are naturally very logical and yet not a philosopher—you exaggerate troubles, look on the darker side of things, make mountains out of molehills —you are irritable—not exactly bad tempered but quick to take offence and not too quick to forgive it.[1] You are untidy but fond of comfort, liking to have everything in place and hating little inconveniences and liking to have all small wants administered to—you hate details and the necessity of dealing with them, and so on and so on. I liked such candour and deemed the description far from ill.

The next letter is written after Scott learnt that he was likely to become a father.

[1] On the margin opposite this sentence there is a note : " I 've never found that.—K. S."

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
7.1.09.

I haven't thrown up my cap, shouted or sung, but not from want of inclination—only I think a growing sedateness of demeanour, proper parental dignity, prevented me—yet must I confess that after the receipt of your letter I rolled Everett[1] on the floor of my cabin, from which I must imagine that I 'm not altogether normal. . . .

Success to the dinner. I won't be there but I will soon after, I must. Don't forget you must give Haldane something to drink ![2]

I have been dining with the Admiral, very dull except for a rather pretty wife of the Captain of the " Queen," David Beatty—I remember him a lieutenant on his pay. He slipped into two wars and will be an Admiral at 38, record for a century.

The next was written when he was, in a phrase of his own, "most outrageously and inconsequently depressed " by lack of opportunity.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
17.1.09.

I can't describe what comes over me, it 's too indefinite. I 'm obsessed with the view of life as a struggle for existence, and then forced to see how little past efforts have done to give me place in the struggle. I seem to be marking time, grudging the flying moments, yet impotent to command circumstances. I seem to hold in reserve something that makes for success, and yet to see no working field, and so there 's the consciousness of wasting and a truly deep " unrest." All these thoughts and sensations are in me, complicating simple

[1] A bearded fellow officer.
[2] His wife drank nothing but water.

issues and disturbing the current of daily life—and the outward signs are the black moods that come and go with such apparent disregard for the feelings of those dear to me. Have all the patience you can.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
28.1.09.

This morning came a letter from Bridgeman. He says he has succeeded after much opposition in creating the billet, that I shall hear from the Admiralty about it, and that he hauls down his flag on March 24th—It 's a very nice letter as usual. This puts the thing beyond uncertainty, and so, my dear, early in April I shall take up my abode in London without doubt. That is all the news but it is important.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
20.3.09.

I had to telegraph, No, no—To-night the Captains have given a farewell dinner to Lord Charles—to-morrow I must go round and about saying goodbye — Monday I have a Court of Enquiry to preside over—Tuesday I hope my relief comes—Monday night there 's a big dinner given by the Vice Admiral, then an At Home by Lord Charles. Tuesday night my own officers give me a farewell dinner—you see the programme is full.

Lord Charles was splendid to-night—he spoke for three quarters of an hour — with great dignity and excellent taste, and yet with strong courage. He admitted no close to a career of usefulness ; he could become no party man to be trammelled by the exigencies of the party note—but he must strive to voice the experience of 50 years' service in the interests of the greatest service of the greatest Empire—and so on—flummery perhaps, yet this man commands great things—he

stands four square to the winds of heaven—a man.—How strange it all is—the technical knowledge of the man is meagre, his skill as tactician is doubtful—yet all would follow him trusting, confident in the dominant *personality*.

I meant to write at great length but then came this morning a long letter from Bridgeman ; he wants the organisation of the office. I 've sent something after much labour. Then also came orders to sit on a Court of Enquiry on a man nigh killed in the " New Zealand "—What with winding up matters here and there others added, I 've had no moment to put pen to paper all day—More, I know there 'll be none to-morrow.

The responsibility for each great ship in a fleet like this is a big one—We left Portland on Wednesday—manœuvred in a half fog in the afternoon and continued down Channel with a furious easterly gale behind—a newly commissioned ship in front, another behind and my own officers rather rusty in their work created a trying position, so I stuck to the bridge throughout the night and there wasn't much comfort in it. All Thursday we manœuvred—interesting work but tiresomely long hours—Thursday (last) night things were more peaceful and I slept some hours in my clothes, to-day we are well up the Irish Channel, all the day the sky was clear and sun bright—very welcome, but the wind is still strong from the north. To-night I shall get some intermittent sleep but shall have to be up at 2, again at 4 and then at 6—At 7.30 we get to Lough Swilly—You thought we were going to Belfast. Swilly, I fancy, must be a long way from Downhill[1]—but I haven't looked at the map—However, I don't think we shall have much rest at Swilly anyway.

During the cruise we 've been working at the problem of the formation of a very large fleet for cruising purposes,

[1] The home of his wife's family on Lough Foyle.

the idea being to have this cumbrous body in immediate preparation to form the line of battle—the battle line is four miles in length, which may give an idea that the problem is not simple. But though movements are simple enough, the fact that the masses moved are so costly, ponderous and filled with human life, and the risks taken consequently so important, makes the game more absorbing and fascinating than probably any that times of peace can produce.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
22.3.09.

I 've been to another farewell to Lord C.—it grows a trifle monotonous and interferes with everything else. Here are all my Bridgeman schemes half hatched. I must press on. To-morrow we coal—I must go to the " Hibernia "—I must finish general letters—I must complete the packing. I must dine with the officers and —and—I must have the " devil of a day "—as I did indeed to-day for I 've rested not at all. Goodnight therefore.

I 've a letter written 2000 miles up the Amazon, and it has fired my wandering spirit.

H.M.S. " Bulwark "
Channel Fleet
29.3.09.

You realize that naval affairs are momentous. I was intensely interested to see how all developed—we 've not seen the end hopefully—I 've spent some two hours closely studying debates. Then I 'm tired too for I 've scarce had a rest for a week—all day on deck and five or six calls at night with ten minutes on deck on each occasion. It 's been rather fun nevertheless, but I wish I had someone intelligent to discuss matters with.

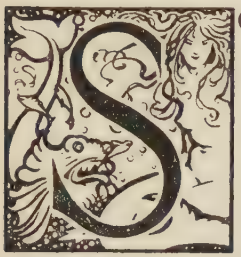
That was the last letter written by Scott from a battleship. But he had a year's more work to do for the Navy, in the period while England was speeding up construction of Dreadnoughts, in reply to the sudden disclosure that, when the Liberal Government, as a gesture of conciliation, dropped its programme from three new ships to two, Germany had snatched at the chance to lessen the dwindling gap between the two fleets.

It may well seem strange that an officer so zealous, and so ambitious, who was one among those clearly marked out for great opportunities in case of war, should have been planning in 1909 to take with him out of sight and out of reach, beyond all possibility of communication, the most adventurous spirits in his own service that he could find.

The answer is simply that though Scott looked forward to war as probable, he was convinced that he and his company would be back well before it was likely to break out. And in point of fact those who returned played their part in that other epic. The navigating officer of the "Terra Nova" went down with his ship at the battle of Jutland. Another of the ship-party also perished in action.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAUNCH OF THE LAST JOURNEY



COTT'S post at the Admiralty was that of Naval Assistant to the Second Sea Lord—Admiral Bridgeman. The appointment dated from March 23rd, 1909, and he held it till December 2nd of that year. His special concern was with questions of personal qualification—the judgment and selection of men for promotion. He was also in this year chosen to serve on a Committee to enquire into the numbers of officers required for the various branches—military, marine and engineering—of his service.

During these nine months in which he lived at the house in Buckingham Palace Road he left every morning about nine o'clock for his office, worked till after five, was home by six and then after dinner gave himself to the project which was never out of his mind.

It had been his purpose, matured before he met his wife, to complete, or at least to extend much further, the explorations begun in the " Discovery " expedition. He had ascertained then for the first time what manner of terrestrial formation lay beyond the mountain chain which backed the coast of Ross's Sea ; but wider survey was desired, and the objective indicated, if only by its appeal to imagination, was the Pole itself. But apart from this adventure, a solid foundation of scientific work had been laid at an accessible point in the Antarctic ; work could resume there from the basis of the known ;

and this in itself appealed to Scott, who showed himself always a lover of continuity.

Marriage might conceivably have made an obstacle to his projects, but the marriage which he made was an added incentive. His letters indicate sufficiently that his wife "gave," as Sir Clements Markham says in his *Lands of Silence*, "signal encouragement and help to her husband in all his work connected with the expedition."

She was his chief confidante in every detail of it. A line some weeks before he left the "Bulwark" illustrates this :

H.M.S. "Bulwark"
Channel Fleet
21.1.09.

I 've heard nothing from Hamilton but I expect he is in communication with the engine people and must give him a day or two—but it might help if you will telephone to him.

. . . I 've a very satisfactory letter from Colbeck [he was captain of the "Morning"], he 's arranged for free passage of sledge from Hull to Christiania—will remove all customs' obstacles and try and get a special rate to Hamar—All this will be a great help—Hamilton is the only delay.

His wife's craftsmanship was of service : she could make drawings to his sketches of general design. But often she had no more to do than sit curled up on a sofa while he worked and worked at his desk, ciphering out all the complex commissariat needed, and the cost, and the ways and means. All the time that he was laboriously striving to compass the enterprise which—at the luckiest—must separate him from her for years, he grudged half an hour's absence, even in the next room.

CAPTAIN SCOTT AND HIS SON, 1910

On September 13th, 1909, the plans of the expedition were made public and an appeal for support was launched. This second expedition had not the official genesis of the first. It was undertaken on the initiative and responsibility of Scott alone. The British, Australian, New Zealand, and South African governments gave grants. The Admiralty gave leave to the ranks and ratings concerned, and when the time came the Royal Geographical Society gave a farewell dinner. But the expedition was Scott's expedition, and his too were its financial cares.

On Sept. 14th, the day following the official birthday of the enterprise, his son was born, and christened Markham for his second name, after the aged promoter of the first expedition.

In December Scott resigned his appointment, went on half pay, and set himself to a tour of England in quest of funds. A handful of notes suggest the life of the time:

174, Buckingham Palace Road,
S.W.
18.11.09.

Ask all the Mayors you can find of course ; I 'll stop down to meet them. I 'm missing you severely. Anniversary meeting at the R.G.S. to discuss polar observations. Anniversary dinner at the Trinity House. Sir R. Rodd came and spoke nicely.

174, Buckingham Palace Road,
S.W.
23.11.09.

Between £20 and £30 since I went Wolverhampton, *c'est tout*. We must be stirring when I 'm free. Let 's go hand in hand everywhere ! ! Stackhouse has engaged a hall and Lord Mayor at Middlesborough Feb. 2 and 3, and is off North to other places—good man. We shall

get through—but the Admiralty palls with an absent Bridgeman.

174, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.
25.11.09.

£40 to-day—nothing from Wales—made an agreement with Bowring to pay only £5000 [1] on the 8th, don't know how I shall manage even that but must see Speyer next week.

Undated.

Very poor day yesterday, punctured motor tyre and nearly everyone out, the only people I saw very poor specimens, but d'Anson has offered me £30 a year for 4 years, a really fine subscription. There is a big dinner at Redcar to-night. I see Wharton (£75,000 a year) to-morrow by appointment. The people here are extraordinarily kind and attentive—the house is a beautiful old place, but the furniture! My goodness—yet they preserve great veneration for the old part. The wall of my room has old Chinese paintings on pigskin brought home 2 centuries ago and giving the most fascinating scenes of Chinese life—there is some old English tapestry and armour mixed with modern furniture of the most aggressive type. I have a type-writing lady busy in the morning—one way and another the work is accumulating.

4.2.10.

This place won't do—wasting my time to some extent—Shall make other arrangements to-night. I don't think there is a great deal of money in the neighbourhood, and then the social position of the people here isn't good and that 's a bar in other places—but the great difficulty is to find people in. Anyway it won't do and I 'm wasting

[1] For the ship.

good time to some extent. Stackhouse dines here to-night—his little wife has come. Last night dined with rich man at Redcar—Alfred Cochrane, he will give, but not very much, and when he asked others to join his party, hinting broadly the object, there was a mighty poor attendance ! !

6.2.10.

Things have been so-so here, but some marked successes leading to an organization which will certainly be productive. I shall leave matters in train. I 've written to Manchester to prepare everything for the 16th. I think all will be well there. I 've been countless miles in the motor these days, you 'd have enjoyed a good deal of it.

7.2.10.

To-morrow I have a meeting on Change at Middlesborough, and hope for some good business. I am sending you a paper. I dictated the conversation—I hope you will agree that the arguments are getting better and their expression much better.

8.2.10.

I went to a dance last night with the new M.P. Met several people—went on Change this morning. Sir Hugh Bell introduced me—I spoke—not well but the room was beastly and attendance small—Have arranged for the collection of subscriptions and optimists think £1000 will result. To-morrow Darlington. I stay with Sir J. Backhouse—Thursday, York.

There is no imaginable process more wearing to the nerves and temper than that of soliciting money for a public object—and when the object to be promoted is one in which the promoter has a direct interest, the task is more than ever dreadful. It will be seen that it told

upon Scott. He had to go round and induce unknown persons to provide the funds by which he and a number of like-minded companions would be enabled to go and risk their lives, suffering almost unendurable hardships for the advancement of knowledge and in the pursuit of adventure. One millionaire could have paid the whole with a fraction of his possessions—the sum in view was only £40,000—but it had to come in by driblets ; and since the public's sympathy had to be enlisted, a simple direct appeal must be found. Scott undertook to get to the South Pole if it were humanly possible ; and this made a sporting offer. But it left him committed to this endeavour at the expense of other endeavours, not less laborious, yet more feasible and perhaps more interesting.

In any case, nothing could have been less to a naval officer's liking than this whole business of beating up funds. The letters given above suggest the distractions and preoccupations in the life of these two newly married people. But what they suggest is not by any means the whole truth. The note of tenderness seems lacking. When Scott wrote to his wife on business, he used the shortest words, and here and there the habitual tone of command breaks out. But—except when he was only to be absent for a few hours—all these letters have much of tenderness that is necessarily withheld from publication. One, however, written at this time may be given almost in full ; it tells clearly that this votary of discipline joyfully accepted the " discipline of character " which marriage has been said to be. It has the finest humility, that which is most sincere, and it admits frankly how his temper failed at times under the strain of this quest for means. Later—when he got to the scene of his task—we shall find him looking back on this time and saying that during it he had lost confidence in himself and thereby lost something of his efficiency. But this letter

tells how he got help, and welcomed help, to fight against the varying moods that were inherent in a nature so self-fashioned.

14.2.10.

I was lying abed thinking last night, and all you 'd done and are doing for me spread itself out—and I saw all the brave attempts to conquer the horrid parts of me, and to-day I must write and tell you. . . . When things look bad, when I 'm tiresome or petulant, don't think your care is wasted. When I 'm away on the snows it will be bad to remember that I 've grieved you, but it would be infinitely worse if I thought you didn't know that I understood your sacrifices. My dear, my dear, my heart is very full of you in spite of the hard crust which you find it so difficult to get through.

By the spring of 1910, £10,000 had been raised from the public. Government now added a grant of £20,000 and consented to lend Scott and other officers to take part in what was now to be called the National Antarctic Expedition ; and on June 1st, 1910, Scott was detailed on full pay to command the expedition.

He had passed six months of extremely straitened finances, with nothing but his half-pay to live on—from which he made large deduction for his mother. With his appointment, the actual stringency ceased ; but a note among his papers shows that he set aside roughly three-sevenths of his income to the use of his mother and sisters. This, however, left nearly £500 for himself, his wife and child—great affluence compared with the months in which he and she, moving very much in the world's eye, had less than £300 a year to spend. The letters which have been printed above make it plain what such a way of living meant to a man with Scott's disposition.

He had been able, however, to avoid all parsimony in the equipment of his expedition. The Admiralty lent four officers, himself in command, with Lieutenant (now Admiral) Edward Evans as second in command of the main party ; with them were Lieutenants Pennell and Rennick, who were destined to remain on the "Terra Nova." Lieutenant Wilfred Bruce, Mrs. Scott's brother, an officer of the Royal Naval Reserve, accompanied them as a volunteer.

The project was to land Scott and Evans with twelve bluejackets, also lent by the Admiralty, somewhere near the "Discovery's" old quarters ; and then to carry another party of six under Lieutenant Victor Campbell—another naval officer recently retired—eastward, for exploration of the land whose coast Scott had surveyed and which he had called King Edward VII's Land.

The ship chosen and purchased was the "Terra Nova," which had been sent with the "Morning" to bring back the "Discovery" expedition. Her crew consisted largely of bluejackets, but there were also eight seamen and three firemen from the merchant service.

The two surgeons detached for the landing party were naval officers seconded on full pay—Mr. Levick and Mr. Atkinson. The secretary of the expedition, Mr. Drake, who sailed in the "Terra Nova," was a retired Assistant Paymaster of the Royal Navy.

With the landing party there went also Lieutenant Henry R. Bowers of the Royal Indian Marine, who maintained, if ever man did, the reputation of his service for ability to put a hand to a job and do it to some purpose. It is evident from all the records that no man on the expedition was of more service to its commander than this one. If a better fate than that which fell to him was possible, he had earned it ; but while Scott's name is remembered, his will not be forgotten.

Nor will be that of a comrade from the sister service,

Captain Oates, of the Inniskilling Dragoons, who went with the main party in charge of the ponies.

Thus the executive control, on shipboard, and in both the landing parties, rested with officers of the British fighting services. It was still more exclusively the Navy's concern than had been the "Discovery" expedition. One sees Scott in this.

But not less one sees him in the provision of a scientific staff on a scale for which there was no earlier precedent. Chief of this staff was the companion of his earlier voyage, Dr. Edward Adrian Wilson—again zoologist to the expedition. Mr. Apsley Cherry Garrard accompanied Wilson as assistant, while Mr. Denis Lilley went with the ship as marine zoologist.

With them were a meteorologist, Dr. Simpson[1]; a biologist, Mr. Nelson; a physicist, Mr. Wright, and (indicating Scott's sense of the possible importance of their researches) no less than three geologists, Mr. Griffith Taylor, Mr. Debenham, and Mr. Priestley. It should be added that one of the two naval surgeons, Mr. Atkinson, was a parasitologist. To these must be added the most famous of all field photographers, Mr. Herbert Ponting.

The party was completed by Mr. Meares, a much experienced traveller, in charge of the dog-team; Mr. Day, a motor engineer, in charge of the motor sledges; and Mr. Tryggve Gran, of the Norwegian naval reserve, came as a ski-expert. Two Siberians (Anton and Dimitri), a groom and a dog-driver, accompanied the landing party and messed with the bluejackets.

Thus the design was that scientific research should proceed continuously and simultaneously in three compartments,—on shipboard, and by two parties on land. Indeed the main party under Scott was to be further

[1] G. C. Simpson, C.B.E., F.R.S., now Director of the Meteorological Office.

divisible, part remaining at the hut and part pushing its work through sledging parties.

But all proceedings and plans were governed by an understanding with the public and the subscribers, implied if not explicit, that the first purpose of the party was to reach the South Pole. At the time no idea of a possible competitor existed ; but this object could not be postponed to the other work, in which Scott himself really took a greater interest. His plans were laid more for the advancement of science than for the conquest of the Pole ; and it will be seen that from the time when he landed he was projecting an extension of the expedition for another season, even after the Pole should have been reached.

But his first plan of campaign had to concern itself with the declared objective—which naturally also tempted whatever was emulous in him ; and the plan was fully laid out. Reaching his landing-place in the Antarctic in the period of open water, that is in December or January, he would, after establishing his base, use the autumn season to form depots of food as far out as he could across the Barrier. For this purpose he had four resources : first, simple man-power ; secondly, his dog team ; thirdly, ponies, bought like the dogs in Siberia ; and fourthly, the motor sledges—if they would work under polar conditions.

In carrying out so complex an organization it was necessary to delegate much. Thus, for instance, the task of selecting and purchasing the ponies and dogs was left to Meares, assisted by Bruce, who travelled through Russia and Siberia on this errand ; while the immediate task of carrying out even that work for which Scott himself was most highly qualified, the refitting of the "Terra Nova," had to be entrusted partially to Lieutenant Evans.

It had been originally projected that the expedition

should start on August 1st, 1910, but time pressed, and Scott decided to let the " Terra Nova " sail under Evans on June 1st for South Africa, while he himself remained to complete the financial and scientific arrangements—an important part of which consisted in securing the promise of large sums from enterprising newspapers for the first cabled news of the expedition.

Accordingly, having seen the " Terra Nova " leave the Thames on June 1st, he boarded her again in the Solent on June 4th. She was registered as a yacht in his name and thus did not need to conform to the merchant shipping regulations. Also, to his great delight, he was elected a member of the Royal Yacht Squadron, and so his ship was entitled to sail under the white ensign, not a merchant flag. From the Solent she sailed to Cardiff, and took in much free coal and other stores till June 15th, when she finally left British shores, and Scott said good-bye to her for a while. He himself with his wife, Mrs. Wilson and Mrs. Evans, went to South Africa by steamer and there also pursued the search for funds. It had to be taken up again in Australia.

On Sept. 2nd the " Terra Nova " sailed from Cape Town. A stone monument, a model of its kind, showing a Viking ship sailing through stormy seas, commemorates the event in a garden by the pier-head. Once more at sea in her, Scott took in hand the business of making his programme clear to the ship's company. " It was an enormous advantage to have our leader with us now," says Admiral Evans in his book *South with Scott*, " his master mind foresaw every situation so wonderfully as he unravelled plan after plan and organized our future procedure."

A letter to his mother from the Cape is characteristic of the man in many ways. His child had been left with her and his sister at Henley:

Admiralty House
Simons Bay
2.9.10.

My own dearest Mother

We are off to-day, that is to say the "Terra Nova" with me on board—Kathleen goes on in the "Corinthic" on the 9th. I expect we shall be about 35 days getting to Melbourne but one can never tell in a ship dependent on winds. Everything so far promises well. I have never seen a more enthusiastic body of people than those in the "Terra Nova" and there has been a complete absence of trouble or friction. Everyone is doing so well that it is impossible to single out anyone for special praise. We shall have 8 more officers and some men to join in New Zealand and I think the newcomers will be as desirable an addition as could be—Isn't this all very promising?

Kathleen and I have had a most interesting time in South Africa. We stayed for a time here with the Egertons and then as the ship did not arrive we decided to accompany them to Pretoria. The Government gave us free passes. We stayed for the best part of a week at Government House, Pretoria, a most enjoyable week. The Gladstones[1] were delightful to us. . . .

Government House, Pretoria, is one of the most beautiful places in the world—mounted on a high kopje with a large view of brown veldt. The sun shone always so that one looks out between cool white columns to distant blues of sky and hill—the house is designed in the old Dutch style by Baker, the only architect here—a genius in his way. Everything grows with water, so that the gardens are bright and beautiful even in winter. The town of Pretoria is some three miles in the valley below, very dusty at present but in transition stage—it is well

[1] Lord Gladstone was then Governor-General.

SIR CLEMENTS MARKHAM AND MRS. SCOTT ON THE 'TERRA NOVA,'
LEAVING THE THAMES, 1910

laid out, work is forward everywhere on roads, trains, etc. Government buildings are in hand—with wise administration it may some day be a very beautiful town. I had interviews with Generals Botha and Smuts, also with Fischer, Sauer, and other members of the Ministry. You know the Dutch party holds the reins—it was interesting to meet and talk to them all and I believe they will not make a bad show. In Pretoria also we lunched with the Methuens—Lord Methuen is the General Commander-in-Chief. We liked them and they us, I think. Mrs. Botha became an ally. After a week the Gladstones went trekking and we journey to Johannesburg. We stayed a night with the Lionel Phillips —he is the great mining magnate. We saw a gold mine and I lectured in the evening. The Phillips are building a beautiful new house. Baker is the architect again. They have commissioned Kathleen to make a statue for a niche in the stoop—a fine chance. We only stayed one day at Johannesburg, yet seem to have done heaps of things and met heaps of people—Kathleen is popular everywhere. Hilda Balfour—Lady Gladstone's sister—had spoken much of her before we came, so I find I am quite in the background ! But seriously our visits everywhere have been successful and we shall leave with a large addition to our list of friends.

Here we have met more politicians—Merriman, Jameson, etc., etc.—and lots of other people. We have seen Groot Schur, Rhodes' beautiful house under the mountain. We have been away to Stellenbosch and seen the old Dutch settlements and some modern farms, and altogether we have enjoyed our little selves immensely. You must understand that there has been an element of business throughout—the country is on the eve of an election, an unhappy time for our business, but the Government has contributed after pressure—only £500 to be sure, but still something. Then my lectures (3)

have yielded £180 and a subscription started by the Governor General may mean £500 or £600 more. . . .

Well, my dear, it 's good to be able to send such a rosy report of our doings and I hope to be able to tell you more pleasant tales in the future, but now I must finish this ambling letter. If you can send photographs of Peter, please do. Perhaps Harry would take some snapshots.

My best love to you all. Your letters were a delight to us both, as you can imagine. Goodbye.

Your loving son

CON.

When the "Terra Nova" reached Melbourne, a telegram awaited Scott in the harbour:

Madeira. Am going South. AMUNDSEN.

This was the first intimation that there would be an immediate rival in the work of exploration in the south. Amundsen's expedition, for which Nansen's old ship the "Fram" had been secured, had been reported to be going to the Arctic. A surprise was thus sprung on the Englishmen. We have a record of Scott's feelings in a letter to his wife, quoted later on: it shows, what knowledge of his temperament would have led one to suppose, that he did not underrate the menace to his plans. A new element of strain was added to his task of leadership, which already involved so much that had not been exacted of him on the former occasion—for on being appointed to command the "Discovery" expedition, he took over a provided machinery. Even now in Australia he was under the galling necessity of breaking away from his proper task to set out from Melbourne "on yet another begging campaign," whilst Evans took the "Terra Nova" on to Lyttelton in New

Zealand. The leader, by himself in the "Terra Nova" some weeks earlier, in the unwonted leisure of that journey wrote for his wife a letter designed and destined to be read long after. It was addressed :

" To Mrs. R. F. Scott, to be opened in England."

At Sea
October 1st, 1910.

Soon there won't be any post to bring you letters when I am thinking of you, so I write to you now for you to read some day in England—and when you read you will know something of what will be in my thoughts and remain in my thoughts till we meet again. Perhaps it needed this first short separation to show me how much happiness you have brought me, and how much I have grown to depend on you, and how sweet to me that dependence is.

I shall always be thinking of the wise things you did and made me do until you brought me to a better sense of the fitness of things, and landed me cured of the faults of my solitary estate in spite of the hardening of the years. You have taught me many things indeed, and, best of all, to value things more rightly. I am not anxious for the future either for us both or you alone, if you will take care of yourself. If all is well, I know now that we shall always have enough to be happy together because a little will be enough ; on the other hand I know your courage and can picture the gallant independence you would secure for yourself and our boy,—can picture the ready help given, if only you keep your health. There is only one person who ought to bring our boy up. I am sure he is going to be a fine fellow, but I want you to have the making of his mind as much as you have of his stout little body. It 's good to think you have the boy, you being what you are. One thinks of poor little Mrs. —— and some sorrowful emptiness of life. It will be better to come home to you. . . .

The sun—as I wrote it, I remembered—from November to February, if it should shine on you at any time between or during these months, you may know that the same sun is shining on me at the same time. With us it will be the midnight hours and we shall be sledging. As I tramp alone, it will be good to feel the rays and think that similar ones are falling on a small lady, and a still smaller man who is toddling about with her. . . .

I have been adding little bits to this letter from time to time, and now the time has come to close it . . . for much has to be written and it is only hours till I see you. I shall be thinking of you always and picturing your daily life, wondering always what you are doing and whether you are thinking of me ; and so, good-bye.

God bless you and the boy.

A great deal of final arrangement had to be accomplished in New Zealand, among " most hospitable and friendly people." Perhaps nothing gives a pleasanter glimpse of Scott than a letter enclosed to his sister Lady Ellison Macartney for his small niece :

Te Koraha
Christchurch, N.Z.
10.11.10.

My dearest little Esther

I was so glad to get your letters and must tell you how good they were and how well you described what you had been doing. I think it is very clever of you to be able to write so nicely. I liked to hear about the games you have been playing and about " Peggy " and about " Dinah." You know we are right round on the opposite side of the World. If you could look down through the Earth right under your feet with a great big telescope you would see Auntie Kathleen and me at the other end, but you wouldn't see Peter, would you ?

because I expect he 's crawling about on the floor at Henley. You would see the " Terra Nova " lying in the harbour and not very far away a whole lot of white ponies—nineteen of them—in charge of two Russians who cannot speak any English at all—but they must be able to talk sense because the ponies and the dogs understand them quite well. The dogs are rather fierce and the people who don't know them have to be careful not to go too close or they would get bitten—but wasn't it funny—there was a girl the same age as Phoebe who went up to the fiercest dog of all and put her arms round his neck—and the dog didn't mind at all. When you grow older you will understand that there are lots of animals and lots of people who are like that dog.

We are getting ready to sail away and when you are having your Christmas dinner which will be very soon after you read this, you can imagine the " Terra Nova " all amongst the ice—great big pieces larger than the Mint or even the Tower will be all around her and the sea will be full of seals and penguins. Auntie Kathleen will show you pictures when she gets home and then you will understand what I mean—and she will tell you how busy I was before I left and how difficult it was for me to write letters. So you see, dear, although this isn't a very long one you must understand that I shall be thinking of you all at Christmas and hoping that you are having a very merry time—and that you won't forget

Your loving

Uncle Con.

The " Terra Nova " sailed from Lyttelton on Saturday, November 25th, 1910 ; but she had to call again at Dunedin, on Sunday night. On the Monday there were farewells and a dance. On the Tuesday afternoon she finally set sail, Scott joined her here—Mrs. Scott with Mrs. Wilson and Mrs. Evans staying on board till she

was past the Heads, when a tug took them ashore. And that was Scott's parting from his wife.

A letter to his mother was written before he left Lyttelton to join his ship—for his last voyage.

British Antarctic Expedition
" Terra Nova," R.Y.S.
28.11.10.

My dearest Mother,

This is the last line before sailing and though short it is full of good cheer. Kathleen and I are journeying to Dunedin and a telegram tells us that the " Terra Nova " arrived there last night.

Everything is in splendid order. You could not imagine a gayer merrier lot of people than those on board and the manner in which the work is done is beyond praise.

My dearest Mother, I shall leave with high hopes and it 's good to feel that all is going well at home. I wish indeed you had a summer rather than a winter in front of you, but as our winter comes on I shall think of the sun shining on you again and hope that you will be taking full enjoyment from it.

The Bishop of Christchurch held a service on board the ship before we sailed from Lyttelton. He gave a very nice address which I think all must have appreciated. I know you will be glad to hear this.

Goodbye, my dear, all love to you all. Don't be anxious for me at any time.

Your loving son

Con.

" Don't be anxious." Yet within two days Scott's last voyage came near to ending. The " Terra Nova " like the " Discovery " had set out, her decks crowded with

what Bowers in his letter to his mother called "garbage fore and aft." "Still," Bowers added, "risk nothing and do nothing; if funds could not supply another ship, we simply had to overload the one we had or suffer worse things down south."

Accounts of that storm when the deck cargo broke loose and coal bags turned themselves into battering rams have been written by several most competent witnesses; for the purposes of this book it is needful only to quote a couple of observations from Bowers:

"Captain Scott was simply splendid, he might have been at Cowes, and to do him and Teddy Evans credit, at our worst strait none of our landsmen who were working so hard knew how serious things were."

We can all read Scott's own account, which naturally says nothing about himself, but a great deal in praise of the landsmen who were employed baling the ship as if she were a dinghy, and who actually succeeded in keeping the water under. But again one should quote Bowers:

"That Captain Scott's account will be moderate you may be sure. Still, take my word for it, he is one of the best, and behaved up to our best traditions at a time when his own outlook must have been the blackness of darkness."

We know enough about this quaint but most capable little officer to say that no man ever lived who had more right to judge of coolness and courage.

There was more merit perhaps than even Bowers recognized; for Scott was too completely a seaman not to have feelings about luck, and on this journey everything seemed to run against him from the start.

"You know how anxious I was to avoid a gale with the ship deeply laden," he wrote to his wife on December

28th.[1] "We knew perfectly well that she could not be really seaworthy in such a state but that each day of steaming would bring her into better trim. The elements paid slight heed to our wishes."

He went on to give to her, for circulation among the family, a shortened version of the story which is in his book, and which is based on the diary that he kept—and was bound to keep. For it must be insisted again, Scott was responsible for the expedition's finances, and one of the sources on which he had to rely was the publication of a narrative, first in the Press and later in a book. He had to be chronicler as well as chief actor and organizer, and consequently he was at all times throughout the expedition doing very severe brain work that did not properly belong to the task either of command or of organization.

Neither did bad luck end when the danger was over, and the loss of coal and other valuables reckoned. He had a new difficulty to contend against:

On December 6th we crossed the 60th parallel and congratulated ourselves on being safely beyond the belt of westerly gales. I hoped that we should not strike the ice for some time, but again hope was doomed to disappointment.

By the 9th they were in the pack, being still only in latitude 65. Scott had considered all the scientific evidence carefully and had chosen his meridian in consequence, going south along the 178th degree of longitude west; and he was rewarded by finding his progress held up a hundred miles further to the north than he had anticipated.

They were twenty days in the pack. The "Dis-

[1] Letters were brought back by the "Terra Nova" on her return to New Zealand in April 1911.

covery " had got through in four days. " I had expected the belt to be less than 200 miles at the widest," he wrote ; but they had covered 370 miles in a direct line pushing through the half-blocked water, and had spent sixty tons of coal instead of thirty. The account written to his family naturally tells more than the printed book of what this cost him in spirit :

We were steaming for 9 days out of the 20, bumping and crashing into floes all the time.

Five times we were stopped dead and on two of these occasions we waited for long periods, five days at one time and four and a half at another.

We held the record for reaching the Northern edge of the Pack, whereas three or four times the open Ross Sea has been gained at an earlier date.

I can imagine few things more trying to the patience than the long wasted days of waiting. Exasperating as it is to see the tons of coal melting away with the smallest mileage to our credit, one has at least the satisfaction of active fighting and the hope of better fortune. To wait idly is the worst of conditions. You can imagine how often and how restlessly we climbed to the crow's nest and studied the outlook. And strangely enough there was generally some change to note. A water lead would mysteriously open up a few miles away or the place where it had been would as mysteriously close. Huge icebergs crept silently towards or past us and continually we were observing these formidable objects with range finder and compass to determine the relative movement ; sometimes with misgiving as to our ability to clear them. Under steam the change of conditions was even more marked. Sometimes we would enter a lead of open water and proceed for a mile or two without hindrance ; sometimes we would come to big sheets of thin ice which broke easily

as our iron-shod prow struck them and sometimes even a thin sheet would resist all our attempts to break it ; sometimes we would push big floes apart with comparative ease and sometimes a small floe would bar our passage with such obstinacy that one would almost believe it possessed of an evil spirit ; sometimes we passed through acres of sludgy sodden ice which hissed as it swept along the side, and sometimes the hissing ceased seemingly without rhyme or reason and we found our screw churning the sea without any effect.

Thus the steaming days passed by in an ever-changing environment and are remembered as an unceasing struggle.

Then follows a passage which shows how the seaman had once more fallen in love with the creature that was his command :

The ship behaved splendidly—no other ship, not even the " Discovery," would have come through so well. Certainly the " Nimrod " would never have reached the south water had she been caught in such pack. As a result I have grown strangely attached to the " Terra Nova." As she bumped the floes with mighty shocks, crushing and grinding a way through some, twisting and turning to avoid others, she seemed like a living thing fighting a great fight. If only she had more economical engines she would be suitable in all respects.

He was in love too with the men he commanded :

The spirit of the enterprise is as bright as ever, everyone strives to help everyone else and not a word of complaint or anger has been heard on board. The inner life of our small community is very pleasant to

think upon and very wonderful considering the extremely small space in which we are confined.

In the forecastle as in the wardroom there is a rush to be first when work is to be done, and the same desire to sacrifice selfish considerations to the success of the expedition. It is very good to be able to write in such high praise of one's companions and I feel that the possession of such support ought to ensure success. Fortune would be in a hard mood indeed if it allowed such a combination of knowledge, experience, ability and enthusiasm to achieve nothing.

All this was the record abridged from his diary for general circulation among his kin. The more intimate thoughts were naturally for his wife. She had entrusted to Lieutenant Evans—known to them as Teddy—a series of little notes from her to be delivered on suitable occasions. The first was a Christmas greeting and he wrote after receiving it:

January 1st, 1911.

I am writing you an account of our doings, and as they are public affairs I thought you would send it round to the family. There will be many sheets in the account and only a few in this letter, because this is only to tell you that I miss you at every turn.

At Christmas I got your letter, put into my hands by the radiant Teddy. I could hear you saying the words. . . .

As a matter of fact I think I have a good amount of patience for this work. I don't take our set-backs too seriously; or perhaps it is that the realization of a bad position doesn't prevent my mind from grasping at expedients. You needn't worry your head about my attitude under adversity.

What shall I tell you about? The account of our

doings which I send you is meagre enough, but it tells the main outline of what has been happening since we parted. It scarcely seems possible that it only covers a single month, it seems such ages, but after all, life of this sort—so very full of events—is worth living, whereas it is doubtful if I could have made myself content to go on in a common rut, dependent on seniority for advancement. Such a life does seem tame in comparison with this, doesn't it? And you meanwhile—somehow I know that you would rather I was striving for big interesting things whatever the cost was.

I wonder what you are doing. More especially of course I try to picture you on special dates. Where were you when we were making discord for the penguins at Christmas? You were to be nearing Colombo, weren't you? I sent glad thoughts to you, I wonder if you felt them. I looked out-of-doors in the evening on a truly Christmassy scene. On all sides an expanse of snow covered floes, a dull grey sky shedding fleecy snow flakes, every rope and spar had its little white deposit like the sugaring on a cake. A group of penguins were having highly amusing antics close by, and the sounds of revelry followed behind, but on the white curtain of feathery crystals I tried to picture your face, and I said God bless her for having been an unselfish wife, and the best of friends to an undeserving man.

We have sighted Mount Erebus to-night, and on to-morrow much of the future depends. I write at the Ward Room table with a busy group of writers about me. It is Mail Day with a vengeance. When once we start landing stores, it must be work night and day, so no more time for letters. I ought to have told you before that Wilfred gets on very well. He is a very good seaman and an excellent reliable officer of the watch. In a tight place I am sure he would do well.

I am going to keep this letter open for further news.

When you get this, you will have the boy ; how I wish I could see you with the little ruffian. The one thing that comes in on me more and more is the necessity to make him strenuous. Sometimes it seems to me that hard work is the panacea for all ills, moral and physical. I like to think of him growing up with a determination to master things and opportunities to acquire knowledge in a far less desultory manner than his father did.

A few words must be added now, for those who do not know the story. Scott was making for the region so familiar to him, through two years of the earlier expedition ; and his hope was to find a landing-place where the frozen sheet of the Barrier attaches itself to the outer, northward looking, face of Ross Island. This point had been mapped as Cape Crozier. In addition to giving a starting-place available at all seasons for the southward reaching plain, it was the site of a rookery of Emperor penguins, objects of chief interest to the zoologists of the expedition.

But this project had to be abandoned:

Jan. 3rd. Another disappointment to-day, we found the sea quite open off Cape Crozier but a heavy swell breaking on the shore. It would have been madness to attempt to land our stores there, though if we could have done so it was evident the situation would have had all the advantage which our memories pictured. It 's no use repining, so we 're off to Cape Royds.

Pack ice has hove in sight again and we 're going to have difficulty in getting into the strait.

It will be remembered that Ross Island was divided from the mountainous western coast of Ross Sea by McMurdo Sound, which was open water in summer, but froze solid in winter.

The general account to his family may be resumed :

It was evident that we had a considerable choice of wintering spots—we could have gone to either of the small Islands, to the mainlaind, the Glacier Tongue, or pretty well anywhere except Hut Point. My main wish was to choose a place that would not be easily cut off from the Barrier and my eye fell on a cape which we used to call the Skuary a little behind us. It was separated from our old " Discovery " quarters by two deep bays on either side of the Glacier Tongue and I thought that these bays would remain frozen until late in the season and that when they froze over again the ice would soon become firm. These points are still in doubt. To-morrow we shall have no further interest in the ice of this year if we can get our ponies safely across before the last of it goes, but the date at which it freezes over will still affect us, as we shall be cut off in the meantime.

As soon as I had decided on this spot we made for it and were brought up by hard ice a mile and a quarter from the shore. Wilson and I made for the land to find a suitable site for the Hut and meanwhile preparations for landing operations commenced. We found what we knew at once must be an excellently sheltered spot for the Hut and hastened back to the ship. Then landing began, that was at about 10 A.M. on the 4th. In a week's time the whole of our hut, stores, coal, animals and equipment were on the shore, in a fortnight we were able to live in the hut.

Before that he had finished the letter to his wife, to be left on shipboard, and posted when the " Terra Nova," avoiding the Antarctic Night, returned to New Zealand waters in April or May 1911. It ended thus :

January 12th, 1911. I wrote the last sentence on the 3rd. It seems ages ago and wonderful that so much

should have happened in the week that has intervened. Fortune has been kind after all, and every day shows the advantages of the spot we have chosen for our winter station.

I wish you could have a look at our little village on shore and could see how smoothly all is working.

Of course the elements are going to be troublesome, but it is good to know them as the only adversary and to feel that there is so small a chance of internal friction.

The next move here will be the depot journey.[1] I shall wait another week or ten days to get the ponies as fit as possible. In that time also we shall settle down comfortably in our hut, also the wait is necessary for the ship to choose the best time to get to King Edward's Land, so that all considerations work in well together. In the meantime I shall be dashing about a good deal, and I think it best to finish this letter and see it in Drake's safe custody, then before we leave I shall hope to write you another. Am I not in the worst position, for when shall I hear of you again ? What weary months must lapse, but oh, it will be good when the letter does come, to hear how you fare, and all the little ins and outs of home life.

God bless you.

Yours

Con.

There had been a preliminary trial of the transport, with fairly satisfactory results. The ponies were not a good lot, but had improved in condition. "I do not know what we should do without Oates, he is absolutely splendid with them." The dog teams were doing well, "and Meares proves an excellent man to have charge of them."

[1] To lay depots of food for the principal journey south.

On the whole therefore our transport animals promise well. The motor sledges have had a long and difficult trial on very hard ice, and have shown signs of wear in the wood rollers of the chains. Day thinks he can put matters right in the winter—otherwise these machines have done very well indeed. I am sure of the possibility of complete success if only it were possible to give them sufficient trials—the trouble is that the chance of trial only comes during an expedition and when the workshops are far away. For our immediate object I regarded these machines only as a possibly useful auxiliary. I think they may prove it, but shall not be greatly disappointed if they do not.

Broadly speaking, Scott was able to write comfortable words with sincere conviction. All the planning in detail had been carried out with masterly perfection and within three weeks these people had erected, not a hut but " really a house of considerable size, in every respect the finest that has ever been erected in the Polar Regions." There was good provision for scientific study, and as he says,

To sum up, the arrangements are such that everyone is completely comfortable and conveniently placed for his work—in fact we could not be better housed.

Of course a good many of us will have a small enough chance of enjoying the comforts of our house. We shall be away sledging later this year and off again early next season, but even for us it will be pleasant to feel that such comfort awaits our return.

Unluckily, too, one of the motor sledges, the best, had been lost while they were landed ; a weakness showed in the ice where it lay, and in Scott's absence a party tried to rush it by rope-hauling on to the firm floe ; it went through, and down into 200 fathoms.

On the whole Scott's diaries and letters of this time show him in high fettle, delighted with the speed of the work. Yet he had passed through one of his worst moments on January 21st. The ship, with Lieut. Pennell in charge, lay moored to the ice, when a northerly swell came in with a strong wind. She was backed out, and stood away to the west, but came back towards her moorings in the afternoon and was driven aground. Scott, on shore, could only look on and picture the position if she were lost, his communications cut, and he left with sixty people to provide for, instead of thirty. Ultimately she was got off.

"All this took some time" (Cherry Garrard writes), "and Scott himself came back into the hut with us and went on bagging provisions for the Depot journey. At such times of real disaster he was a very philosophical man."

The "Terra Nova" was now free to take Campbell and his party eastward beyond the Barrier to explore King Edward VII's Land; and before she sailed Scott gave Mr. Drake, secretary of the expedition, who remained on board her, this letter to his sister, Lady Macartney:

British Antarctic Expedition
"Terra Nova," R.Y.S.
Glacier Tongue
McMurdo Sound
January 25th, 1911.

My dear old Girl,

I 've asked Kathleen to send you an account of our doings as I 've been rushed day and night since we began the landing of our stores.

You must read the account to the children and perhaps take them to see our cinematograph pictures if they

appear anywhere within reach, as I hope they may soon after you receive this. Enquiry of the Gaumont Company might tell you when and where they are to be seen. I wish I had time to write to the dear small girls but you must give them all sorts of messages and tell them that I think of them very often.

At present all is going very well with us and as we surmount our difficulties and score successes, I cannot but help believing that we have thought things out well and that we deserve some measure of reward. But of course there is no service like this to yield the unexpected and one must be unceasingly watchful. Lucky am I to command such efficient support as is given by the other members of the Expedition. It is impossible to speak too highly of one and all, but of course the most valued and valuable of all is Wilson. He is a positive wonder and has by sheer force of character achieved a position of authority over the others whilst retaining their warmest affection. I have been writing to the dear Mother and trying to convince her that an unavoidable absence of news can have rarely given less cause for anxiety. We shall be as comfortable as possible here for as long as we choose or are obliged to stay.

There are scarcely any circumstances which I would have different. In fact I verily believe there are none.

You must talk and persuade yourself and her that this is so.

And now, dear old girl, goodbye—I wish I could know how you all are but I 'm afraid the pleasure of knowing must be deferred for some 14 months. Meanwhile give my very best love to all and let them know that I am very content with everything as far as our adventures have gone.

With all love to Willy and the children,

Your afft. Brother

Con.

Meantime, because the ice of the Sound was just breaking up, Scott pushed on hurriedly with his first journey to lay out on the surface of the Barrier all the food he could store against next year. The party started on January 25th, and made heavy going ; but from their first depot he wrote a letter to his wife which was sent off with the ship and posted in New Zealand :

Safety Camp
Great Barrier
February 1st, 1911.

I told you we should be cut off from our winter station and that I had to get a good weight of stores on to the Barrier to provide for that contingency. We are safely here with all requisite stores, though it has taken nearly a week. But we find the surface very soft and the ponies flounder in it. It may be only local but I rather fear it is the result of the time of year which I failed to foresee. I sent a dog team back yesterday to try and get snow shoes for ponies, but they found the ice broken south of Cape Evans and returned this morning. We must do the best we can without these articles, though I have asked Pennell to bring some on to Hut Point. We are all very fit and well—the temperature has not been lower than +2°, but we shall get it colder later on. Everyone is doing splendidly and gaining the right sort of experience for next year. Every mile we advance this year is a help for next.

Otherwise there is little news. Everything seems to be going pretty well, but of course there are many uncertainties.

Any way I love you as much as ever and wish I could get a glimpse of you. I have the little red morocco case with your picture in front and the boy at the back.

That was the last letter which she received from him

through any form of post. The rest came to her hands long after she had news of his death.

By the same conveyance, confided to Mr. Drake, came also this letter from Scott's chief and nearest comrade, the companion of both his journeys, and his partner in the last camp. It shows how Dr. Wilson, in whom all the expedition recognized not only a friend but a born leader, felt towards the man whom he himself, after full experience, asked no better than to follow and support.

British Antarctic Expedition
"Terra Nova," R.Y.S.
From Winter Headquarters
Cape Evans
McMurdo Sound
January 17th, 1911.

My dear Mrs. Scott,

It would rejoice your heart I am sure to see your husband in the weather-beaten condition he is in at present. We have had a long spell of hot sunshine, and this on snow and sea ice has combined with cold winds to produce very picturesque effects. He is in the most excellent trim for hard work, and of that there has been no lack. Notwithstanding the one or two losses, and the motor was rather a sad one, we have had the most wonderful good fortune in getting everything on shore, in getting an excellent spot and a new neighbourhood, and in making up a good deal for the extra expenditure of coal in the three weeks of pack ice. Well, as your chief interest will be in your husband I had better stick to him. I am sure he feels as I do, that it was only yesterday that we were here, and that the seven years which have passed over us have left no trace, except, in your husband, a very much more confident grasp of conditions and possibilities, in which he simply

excels. I hope you are very well, and I hope you will keep well, and the boy also. You will be glad to get back to him. With all possible good wishes, believe me your own and your husband's very sincere friend. There is nothing I would not do for him, he is just splendid.

E. A. Wilson—Bill.

CHAPTER VII

PREPARATIONS FOR THE MARCH TO THE POLE

FTER Scott had sent off his letter from Safety Camp on the Barrier to return by the "Terra Nova," a year of life remained to him, and it falls into three parts. First comes the completion of the depot-laying journey and the assembling of his scattered parties into winter quarters. Then the winter of perpetual night from April to September. Finally, the setting out for the conquest of the Pole.

It is unnecessary to go through the complicated evolution of the depot laying. But one incident on the return journey to Safety Camp makes a comment on its name ; for it happened about twelve miles from that haven. Scott, Wilson, Cherry Garrard and Meares were travelling light with two dog teams when suddenly the middle dogs of Scott's team disappeared and the rest sank after them, two by two ; only the great leading dog, Osman, contrived to keep a foothold on the further side of the crevasse. The men had time to haul the sledge clear and then peered down to where the team hung suspended snapping and howling. Gradually they succeeded in hauling up the dogs and unleashing them—eleven out of the thirteen. But two had slipped out of their harness and could be seen "indistinctly on a snow bridge far below." "Then I wondered," says Scott in his diary, "if the last two could not be got, and paid

down the Alpine rope to see if it was long enough to reach the bridge on which they were coiled. The rope is 90 feet and the amount remaining showed that the depth of the bridge was about 65 feet."—It is now necessary to turn to Cherry Garrard :

"Scott proposed going down on the Alpine rope to get them ; all his instincts of kindness were aroused, as well as the thought of the loss of two of the team. Wilson thought it a mad idea and very dangerous, and said so, asking however whether he might not go down instead of Scott if anybody had to go. Scott insisted."

So he was let down and stood on the ledge while the dogs were hauled up in their turn. Thereupon a fight started between the liberated dogs and those of the other still harnessed team, and the men had to go and separate them—leaving Scott where he was.

He meanwhile was occupied in speculating on the trend of crevasses.

"While we were getting him up the sixty odd feet to which we had lowered him he kept muttering, 'I wonder why this is running the way it is—you expect to find them at right angles' ; and when down the crevasse he wanted to go off exploring, but we managed to persuade him that the snow ledge on which he was standing was utterly unsafe, and indeed we could see the nothingness below through the blue holes in the shelf."

Scott's whole attitude to the dogs expresses itself again and again in the period of this trial trip. Their unhappiness affected him powerfully, and he writes this curious piece of dog psychology in his diary :

A dog must be either eating, asleep or *interested*. His eagerness to snatch at interest, to chain his attention to something, is pathetic. The monotony of marching kills him.

This is the fearfullest difficulty for the dog driver on a snow plain without leading marks or objects in sight. The dog is almost human in its demand for living interest, yet fatally less than human in its inability to foresee.

The dog lives for the day, the hour, even the moment. The human being can live and support discomfort for a future.

That is the sensitive, speaking out in this hardy venturer ; and we can see rather than guess that he felt the dogs' fatigue more than his own—and felt it prey on him. This probably accounts in some measure for his growing distaste for depending on this form of transport.

"Bit by bit I am losing all faith in the dogs" (he writes on March 12th, 1911). "I 'm afraid they will never go the pace we look for."

Yet before that he had news of the man who was to anticipate him by reliance on dogs, and by skill in handling them.

On February 22nd he with Wilson, Meares, Lieut. Evans and Cherry Garrard started from Safety Camp for Hut Point, and met two of the party that had been left behind—bringing a mail bag. It came from Campbell, who had been sent east in the " Terra Nova " to explore King Edward VII's Land ; and it related how, entering the Bay of Whales, a bight in the long cliff front of the Barrier, he had found the " Fram " at anchor and Amundsen's party established on shore.

Cherry Garrard has told how the news was received by the expedition and how fiercely it was resented. Scott's own note must be given :

One thing only fixes itself definitely in my mind. The proper, as well as the wiser, course for us is to proceed exactly as though this had not happened. To go forward and do our best for the honour of the country without fear or panic.

There is no doubt that Amundsen's plan is a very serious menace to ours. He has a shorter distance to the Pole by 60 miles—I never thought he could have got so many dogs safely to the ice. His plan for running them seems excellent. But above and beyond all he can start his journey early in the season—an impossible condition with ponies.

The experience of that autumn had shown that ponies suffered terribly from exposure in blizzards ; they could not be protected by a hut like the men, nor bury themselves in snow like the dogs. It would therefore be impossible to start till well on in November when, according to experience, the weather should moderate. Scott depended chiefly on the ponies for haulage of his main provision stores, up to the glacier. Even as it was one pony died on this depot-laying journey.

The news of Amundsen's arrival was swiftly followed by a desperate menace to the expedition.

From Cape Evans to the Barrier there was only one road practicable for ponies and sledges, namely along the ice foot where the slopes of Erebus met the sea. Bowers, Cherry Garrard and Crean with three ponies were marching across this ice, still solid on March 2nd ;

and they camped on it for the night, only to wake and find it splitting about them. They had to work their way back to where the ice foot was attached to the Barrier's cliff front ; and the sea was full of killer whales working in the cracks. At last Crean was able to reach the cliff and climb it, thus bringing word to Scott of the plight. The leader with the help of Oates was able to get the two men safely up the cliff by the Alpine rope and to haul up the sledges and their loads ; but the ponies had to be left, as the floe was drifting. Next day they were sighted in a place that could be reached, but only by leaping over water lanes ; and in these leads killer whales were putting up their heads and eyeing their prey. Cherry Garrard's account of the scene, of which Bowers was the hero, is a thing not to be forgotten. In the upshot a pony was saved ; two fell in and had to be killed where they struggled, to anticipate the worse fate of being torn to pieces living.

It was April 13th when Scott reached his headquarters. Another pony had died. On April 16th he writes, "Have exercised the ponies to-day and got my first good look at them. I scarcely like to express the mixed feelings with which I am able to regard this remnant." If the ponies failed him, his schemes must fall through —unless in the improbable chance of the motors making good. On that side, things looked gloomy enough.

But there was no admixture in the satisfaction with which he regarded the establishment at Cape Evans when he had assembled his complete party. Work was spreading energetically in all directions and he took an early occasion to set out his views fully before his companions, in a lecture given on May 8th. Mr. Griffith Taylor, the Australian geologist, in his *With Scott : the Silver Lining*, wrote thus when the whole account was closed and ended :

"He had thought out all possible details and ultimately carried out his plans exactly. He relied on the ponies essentially and confessed he was disappointed with the dogs, though, he added, this may have been due to their food. With regard to the motors, he hoped they would help, but he was not using these loads in his calculation. He realized that he was carrying out an experiment to benefit future expeditions."

That was the pith of it. Motors might fail with him, but he was on service and the Service goes on. He might help the interests of the Service even by failure from which a necessary lesson could be learnt.

Evidently too he was very plain about the risks. I quote again from Mr. Griffith Taylor:

"The great difficulty would be on the plateau. Shackleton was five weeks there and was nearly done, while the Polar party will have to spend ten weeks on the plateau. . . . If we have bad weather (he added) no one can stick it."

Further, he made clear an extension of the original project.

"One last point. You will see that this will take 144 days. If we start on Nov. 3rd—and earlier will kill the ponies—we can't get back till March 27th. Now, no ship can remain in the Sound so late as this, so that inevitably the Polar party must stay another year; and if a small party stays there might as well be a large party to carry out further explorations."

Before the winter was over, as will appear from a letter to his wife, this suggestion had extended itself to the further project of a second attempt on the Pole if the

first proved unsuccessful. Evidently Scott abhorred the idea of returning ἀτελευτήτῳ ἐπὶ ἔργῳ—with his deed unachieved.—That at least was spared him; he fell in victory.

It must always be remembered too that the feat of getting to this goal was in his mind secondary (and perhaps increasingly so as his knowledge developed) to the purpose of advancing science. Mr. Griffith Taylor has a remarkable note on the value of this strong practically trained mind applying itself to abstract subjects:

"Scott was quicker to see weak links in a chain of argument than any man I have ever met. In my own special study of the glacial geology of the Antarctic his practical knowledge quite balanced what I had gained from books and travels among glaciers of the temperate zone, so that I had many talks with him and owe him much scientifically for his help in criticizing and so strengthening my main conclusions."

He writes again of the discussions which were a main means of enlivening the long darkness:

"Scott was interested in everything and I note that one evening we discussed Mormonism, the mediaeval ramparts of Aigues Mortes, and the pronunciation of ancient Greek."

His last word sums up the whole:

"To few explorers is it given to serve under a leader with Scott's kindly sympathy for every detail of his work."

Add to that Mr. Cherry Garrard's saying that Scott

when he chose to exert it had unequalled power of charm, and we have a picture of the man who was the driving wheel of all that complex activity.

But it now becomes possible to let him be his own interpreter in a letter which shows both sides of his mind —the practical efficient directing quality, shrewd in appreciation of individuals, and generously enthusiastic in response to good help ; and on the other, the sensitive, anxious at the least thought that he should have failed in tenderness. Yet finally, linking the two, there is everywhere implied the confidence of complete comradeship between himself and the woman of his choice ; and one can feel what it meant to him that he could speak out to one other person the results of his self-scrutiny.

The letter was written to be left at Cape Evans when the southern journey started ; for Scott, as has been seen, fully realized that those who went to the Pole could not hope to be back before the " Terra Nova " left the ice-bound waters.

Before writing it, he had returned from what he calls " a remarkably pleasant and instructive little spring journey " to the westward. This pleasure trip lasted thirteen days and covered 175 statute miles in temperatures varying from 15 to 40 degrees below zero—with two blizzards thrown in. He had then set to work to put, as Admiral Evans says, " the final touches to his elaborate plans," and arranged for all communications necessary to be sent by the " Terra Nova " in case he did not return.

" About this time " (Evans adds) " he called on us severally to relieve him if we could of the responsibility of paying us for the second season. Most of us signed the document but not all could afford to do so."

The letter to his wife need not here be given in full as considerable parts of it were incorporated with the diary in *Scott's Last Journey*. But the opening has not been published.

British Antarctic Expedition
" Terra Nova," R.Y.S.
Winter Quarters
October 1911.

I am sending you a copy of my diary through Kinsey.[1] I have asked him not to delay it more than a week, so that it should be in your hands very soon after this letter—of course you will use your discretion in showing it to people, remembering that it has a value, and that few people are really safe. The danger is the verbal repetition of passages or incidents, perhaps in garbled form. The family will of course be greatly interested, and I suggest as the best plan that you should go over to them at Henley and read it to them. It would be wise to avoid passages which are critical of conduct—They are few and I have reason for revising most of them.—In writing to mother and Ettie I shall mention your possession of the diary.

The next person of importance to see it is Reginald Smith. I have written giving permission to publish a magazine article from it at his discretion. Nothing must be kept back from him. I have told him you will have the diary and will show it to him.

I can only think of two others who ought to see it, Sir Clements Markham and Sir Lewis Beaumont. Sir Edgar Speyer [2] is safe if he wishes to see it, but of him more anon. Mr. Wyatt is safe, Longstaff too. You see, I want you to use it to keep the friends of the expedi-

[1] Sir Joseph Kinsey, the kind friend and nurse of the expedition at Christchurch, New Zealand.

[2] Treasurer of the expedition's funds.

tion in good humour. You know who they are and many other names will occur to you. I expect you have kept touch with these people, and I am sure you will understand the situation without further explanation.

Your head is so well adapted for business when you like that I am going to try and explain how things stand, and as you will see there is much for you to do.

When the telegrams get home, I am afraid Speyer and others will be anxious about funds. I have therefore written a long letter to Speyer pointing out the possibility of assets not yet realized. Here is a lengthy extract from it:

"I am prepared to hear that only a very small balance, if any, remains when the ship leaves New Zealand this year. Under these circumstances you will probably think it unfortunate that it should be necessary to leave any members of our party for a second season, and unwise that I should have decided to keep the greater number of them. It remains therefore to consider the assets which can be set against our further liabilities."

Scott's statement of the assets may be more briefly summarized. In the first place he sent home a signed indemnity relieving the funds of liability for the salaries of officers remaining in the south for a second season —including of course his own. Next came the possible sale of the ship, which he estimated at £6000. The third was receipts on Press messages; £2000 was already in sight and £1000 or £2000 more might easily accrue. Fourthly, a member of the expedition had offered to subscribe £3000 instead of £1000 to the funds. "I said I would only call on the full offer if necessity arose." The fifth was the cinematograph films:

"We have in Ponting one of the best field photo-

graphers in the world, and he has not neglected a single opportunity since we came south. The result is the most remarkable series of cinematograph films I have ever seen. We have a proper agreement with the Gaumont Company to exploit them. The expedition takes two-thirds and Ponting one-third of our share. What this share will be can only be a matter of speculation at present. Very large sums have been named, and though I discount the most enthusiastic estimates I cannot help thinking that the films have a great value. Ponting goes home mainly to look after this interest."

Sixth, came the scientific results of the work of the different scientific departments, which had "no direct pecuniary value," but could be relied on "in case it is ever necessary to make a further appeal to the Government."—The rest may be directly quoted :

"Seventh. Reginald Smith my publisher is a close personal friend, and is arranging for publication of the narrative in book and magazine form. It will yield according to the success of the expedition, but in any case I hope for a good sum.

Eighth. I shall of course be prepared to pay off any expeditionary debts by lecturing when I return.

Ninth. A special issue of stamps and some other smaller arrangements will yield considerable sums. Stamps £700 to £1000.

I realize that none of it can be called good security from a business point of view, but as such things as Antarctic expeditions go, it would seem fairly good security for a guarantee.

This brings me to the point of asking you whether in the event of an overdraft you can get it guaranteed till I return.

As regards myself, of course I stand or fall by the

expedition. I set out to carry it through to a finish, scientific publications included, with all the resources I could command. My wife is entirely with me."

After this extract from the letter to Sir Edgar Speyer, there followed a list of business details which he asked his wife to oversee and control—adding recommendations as to persons who might assist her. Mr. Reginald Smith's name came first of these. Then he continued :

All this in one sense seems to be asking you to sacrifice your own interest and the boy's to the expedition—but I know you would wish it that way, so we act straight to ourselves and the world. But you must understand the whole case, for after due consideration I have myself signed the indemnity document referred to in Speyer's letter ; that means that my salary from the expedition will cease to be paid, over and beyond the term which it would have been paid had I returned in the " Terra Nova " in 1912.

If you are in any doubt or difficulty about these matters I think you might do much worse than consult Speyer. You might tell him I wanted to leave enough to educate the boy.

Finally if anything happens to me, don't forget the pension. Sir Lewis Beaumont or someone of that sort would be the person to see you got the best terms, and don't scoff at that because it will want pennies to see the boy through.

Of course most of this is the will-making of a particularly healthy man. I don't feel at all like remaining here, in fact I never felt better or fitter for hard work in all my life. I 'm not going to desert you if I can help it. I can see you setting off on your various missions in a wholly practical manner. The antithesis of the pathetic grass widow. Bless you.

Jotting things as I remember—Keep your eye open for quotations to head my book chapters as in "Discovery."—Mrs. Evans and Mrs. Lashly, wives of old "Discovery" friends, are people you might write to. I have written also. Say I write to you in high praise of their good men, as indeed I should.

Then follows the appreciation of his comrades, which was printed, from this letter, in the *Last Journey*, and need not be repeated here. Yet here may be inserted one more sketch, written by him to his friend Reginald Smith at this time, because the man of whom he wrote was an intimate of the man he wrote to.

To Reginald Smith, K.C.
Winter Quarters
Oct. 26, 1911.

Wilson has been all that you expected of him and I know that is saying a great deal. I find myself daily wondering at his energy, his tact or his unselfishness—such qualities have made him beloved by all and in return he wields the power of an oracle—he is consulted in everything, from the larger issues to the ridiculously small details of daily life and work. I hold him mainly responsible for the extraordinarily amicable relations which have existed amongst us—it is really a fact that there has been no quarrels or other social troubles since the expedition started. To sum up, he has proved himself a greater treasure than even I expected to find him.

Returning to the letter to his wife, it may be well to quote the conclusion on this subject :

I think that it would have been difficult to better the organization of the party. Every man has his work

and is especially adapted for it. There is no gap and overlap. It is all that I desire, and the same might well be said of the men selected to do the work.

Then comes this remarkable piece of self-analysis:

And now that I can say these things and feel myself as I do, a competent leader over the team, I must be honest enough to confess a certain amount of surprise at finding everything so satisfactory. I am quite on my feet now, I feel both mentally and physically fit for the work, and I realize that the others know it and have full confidence in me. But it is a certain fact that it was not so in London or indeed until after we reached this spot. The root of the trouble was that I had lost confidence in myself. I don't know if it was noticed by others consciously, but it was acted on unconsciously, as a dozen incidents in my memory remind me. Had I been what I am now, many things would have been avoided. I can trace these things to myself very clearly and can only hope that others do not, but you see, with this knowledge, I cannot but regard it as lucky that things have come as right as they have. Of course all sorts of things may have gone wrong with matters which are not under my control but which are within the limits of my responsibilities, such as Campbell's party, the ship, etc., but it is significant of my recovery that I do not allow anxieties to press on me where I deem my actions to have been justified.

Everything in these seventeen pages seems to have been of myself and my work, and so far not a word of my thoughts of you and the boy and our home, but I know that I cannot tell you too much of things as they are with me, and I know you will not think yourself forgotten when I ask so much of you.

Your postman has very faithfully delivered your

little notes,[1] and I treasure them not only because they are yours, but because they express the inspiriting thoughts which I would have you hold. At such a time as this it thrills me most to think of your courage. It is my greatest comfort to know that you possess it, and therefore by nature can never sit down and bewail misfortune. I can imagine you nothing but sturdily independent and determined to make the most of the life you possess. . . .

Do you know that I sometimes feel guilty about mother. In these last strenuous years I seem to have had so little time to spare to her. She is getting old and I am sure you will be good to her. I think the point is to persuade her that she is useful. It must be very bad when one realizes that one has come to be unnecessary—the fortunate part is that it is rarely realized, but mother might be the sort of person to think that of herself.

I am writing to her of course, but not at any great length. I will tell her that you will be coming down to her with the diary and all sorts of news.

It seems a woeful long time since I saw your face and there is the likelihood of a woefuller time ahead, and then what. I want to come back having done something, but work here is horribly uncertain and now of course there is the chance of another man getting ahead.

I don't know what to think of Amundsen's chances. If he gets to the pole it must be before we do, as he is bound to travel fast with dogs, and pretty certain to start early. On this account I decided at a very early date to act exactly as I should have done had he not existed. Any attempt to race must have wrecked my plan, beside which it doesn't appear the sort of thing one is out for.

[1] Lieut. Evans, to whom these had been entrusted.

Possibly you will have heard something before this reaches you. Oh, and there are all sorts of possibilities. In any case you can rely on my not doing or saying anything foolish, only I am afraid you must be prepared for the chance of finding our venture much belittled.

After all it is the work that counts not the applause that follows, so you needn't worry your head with the thought that this matter troubles me ; to be quite honest I very rarely think of it.

These last three paragraphs were placed otherwise in the arrangement of the excerpts for the published account in *Scott's Last Journey* ; but they stand better where Scott himself wrote them. They were his last words before he set out on the last adventure ; they ring true. He was ambitious, but with the ambition for a real distinction. " It is the work that counts not the applause that follows."

Yet the last word of this stage may be left, not to Scott but to the one of whom Scott wrote—

Bowers is all and more than ever I expected of him . . . about the hardest man among us and that is saying a good deal—nothing seems to hurt his tough little body and certainly no hardship daunts his spirit—an indispensable assistant to me in every detail concerning the management and organization of our sledging work, and a delightful companion on the march.

This is what Lieutenant Bowers sat down to write to his leader's wife, when all were getting ready their final post. It shows how completely the leader had imbued his follower with his own feelings about the greater glory of doing the deed by man power alone. It is boyish—but with the boyishness of a very valiant young man ;

British Antarctic Expedition
" Terra Nova," R.Y.S.
Winter Quarters
Cape Evans
27.x.1911.

Dear Mrs. Scott,

Now that we will so soon be under weigh with the great journey, I am taking the opportunity of writing a few letters in case the inevitable work with the ship on our return admits of insufficient time. You will have heard all about us from the Telegrams[1] and from Captain Scott. Certainly we have had to put up with an almost unparalleled succession of initial reverses, and if any man had to endure the trials of Job again, I am sure Captain Scott did, when the Depot Journey terminated with such a chapter of accidents following hard upon the news of Amundsen's little game to the eastward. However, good often comes out of the worst and perhaps the necessary reorganization of the original plans has been the best thing for our object. Certainly to trust the final dash to such an uncertain element as dogs would be a risky thing, whereas man-haulage, though slow, is sure, and I for one am delighted at the decision. After all, it will be a fine thing to do that plateau with man-haulage in these days of the supposed decadence of the British race. Anyhow, whether we succeed or not, we all have confidence in our leader and I am sure that he will pull it through if any man will. I am glad to say also that a certain amount of experience will help us to approach the job with—in the case of some of us—a little less of that spirit that did not do us credit on our departure from Cardiff.[2] We have had a topping winter here. The hut is a model of comfort and I

[1] Despatched when the " Terra Nova " returned to New Zealand in May 1911.

[2] A reference to a revel before sailing; harmless enough.

am sure I have never slept in a more comfortable bed than my bunk here. Everything has gone so smoothly —not to say quickly—that really the time to start has come round before we have hardly realized it, or done half the work projected for the winter.

I am glad that Captain Scott is letting me stay down here another year. I feel that I should enjoy several, though if I overdo it my Mater may have something to say on the subject. Anyhow, I cannot say I have had a dull moment and with such an excellent party it will really be a privilege to stay here. I am hoping that it will be possible for the circumstances of funds etc. to admit of Captain Scott remaining here, if he catches the ship on his return. Another season's work will be full of interest and it will be all the better for us if he stays. I don't think you will see eye to eye with me over that though. I hope your little boy is as lively and strong as he appears in the many photographs of him I see round the Captain's table. With kind regards. Hoping this will find you very well and that this same mail will bring you the very best of news.

I remain

Yours sincerely

H. R. Bowers.

CHAPTER VIII

ATTAINMENT AND THE END

HE last chapter is soon written, for great part of the world knows the tale by heart. Yet even for those who know, certain things may be recapitulated. There were three stages: first the long snow plain of the Barrier; then the Glacier,[1] when they were on rock and ice; lastly, the interminable summit plateau, a featureless waste of dry gritty sand-like snow.

The start was made on November 1st (1911), the motor party under Lieutenant Evans going ahead. On November 4th the motors broke down and were abandoned. The fatal defect was overheating of the air-cooled engines, made more disastrous by the great cold of the outside air. But machine power had dragged a heavy load some sixty miles.

Evans and his party from this point were man-hauling. Scott and the rest were accompanied by the ponies and the dogs up to the Glacier—332 statute miles of marching. On most days they covered fifteen miles, but it was a terrible progress for the ponies. One was shot on November 24th, another on the 28th, a third on December 2nd; they were used for food, men as well as dogs profiting.

On December 5th an unlooked for blizzard, coming

[1] Named by Scott the Beardmore Glacier.

STATUE OF CAPTAIN SCOTT, BY LADY SCOTT (EARLY STAGE IN CLAY)

with a high temperature, so that the snow was wet, held up all progress for four days. This gravely affected Scott's time schedule.

On the 9th it cleared, but there was only one more short march for the ponies, and at the gateway to the glacier all were killed, and their carcasses stored in the Lower Glacier Depot. Next day Meares and the dogs were sent back, and the expedition went forward in three man-hauling parties of four to each sledge.

The blizzard had thrown Scott behind his time-table, but otherwise his arrangement had worked out. That it did so—that the ponies were able to do their part—was due essentially to one man. Mr. Cherry Garrard tells a story :

Oates came up to Scott as he stood in the shadow of Mount Hope at the entrance to the glacier. "Well, I congratulate you, Titus," said Wilson. "And I thank you, Titus," said Scott.

That meant much. It meant that whoever was chosen for the final party to reach the Pole, Oates should if possible be among them. That was the supreme reward in this service ; and it was no small one. It gave Captain Oates the opportunity to earn an imperishable name.

The distance actually covered on the Beardmore Glacier was 126 miles ; and they were hauling to begin with the formidable weight of 200 pounds a man—800 to each sledge. Scott had the notes of Shackleton's journey to guide him, and the timing of his marches to compare. The blizzard on the Barrier had thrown him badly behind, but by the time he reached the plateau he had picked up the lag of four days. This was largely due to brain work ; Cherry Garrard wrote on December 17th :

There is no doubt that Scott knows where to aim for in a glacier, as it was just here that Shackleton had two or three of his worst days' work in such a maze of crevasses that he said a slip often meant death for the whole party. Scott avoids the sides of the glacier and goes nowhere near the snow ; he often heads straight for apparent chaos, and somehow when we appear to have reached a cul-de-sac we find an open road.

Under these conditions they did one march of 23 miles on December 20th, pulling 160 pounds a man. Beyond this was made the Upper Glacier Depot, and from here Scott sent back one of his three supporting parties—three scientists, Atkinson, Wright and Cherry Garrard, with Keohane, one of the two Irish bluejackets.

The next day saw them on the plateau with 337 miles to march. They pushed ahead for a fortnight, averaging close on fifteen miles a day—making progress at the rate of nearly two miles an hour. On January 4th, the final sifting was made. Lieut. Evans with the seaman Lashly, who had been man-hauling for 200 miles more than the others, were turned back, and with them Scott sent Crean, the second Irishman. Crean wept at the parting, and Scott did not easily resign himself to dismiss this, his most personal attendant. The one bluejacket chosen was Petty Officer Evans. It was essential to have one of these skilled mechanics for sledge repairs. Oates was added as a fifth to the team, partly because Scott longed to disappoint as few as possible, partly because his service with the pack animals had earned a special reward ; perhaps, too, as Mr. Cherry Garrard has suggested, because the naval officer wished to pay honour to the sister service.

The returning party, those three men who last had sight of Scott and his comrades living, reached home to

tell the tale ; but Lieutenant Evans has let the world know how he owed his life to Lashly and Crean, the two seamen who dragged him for days when he could not walk.

The last depot on the plateau was made on January 15th. Scott's diary read :

It is wonderful to think that two long marches would land us at the Pole. We left our depot to-day with nine days' provisions, so that it ought to be a certain thing now, and the only appalling possibility the sight of the Norwegian flag forestalling ours. Little Bowers continues his indefatigable efforts to get good sights, and it is wonderful how he works them up in his sleeping-bag in our congested tent. (Minimum for night −27.5°.) Only 27 miles from the Pole. We *ought* to do it now.

The next day they saw a flag left by the Norwegians and the trail of dogs and men :

This told us the whole story. The Norwegians have forestalled us and are first at the Pole. It is a terrible disappointment, and I am very sorry for my loyal companions. Many thoughts come and much discussion have we had. To-morrow we must march on to the Pole and then hasten home with all the speed we can compass. All the day-dreams must go ; it will be a wearisome return. . . .

Wednesday, January 17.—The Pole. Yes, but under very different circumstances from those expected. We have had a horrible day—add to our disappointment a head wind 4 to 5, with a temperature −22°, and companions labouring on with cold feet and hands.

We started at 7.30, none of us having slept much

after the shock of our discovery. We followed the Norwegian sledge tracks for some way ; as far as we make out there are only two men. In about three miles we passed two small cairns. Then the weather overcast, and the tracks being increasingly drifted up and obviously going too far to the west, we decided to make straight for the Pole according to our calculations. . . . To-night little Bowers is laying himself out to get sights in terribly difficult circumstances ; the wind is blowing hard, T. −21°, and there is that curious damp, cold feeling in the air which chills one to the bone in no time. We have been descending again, I think, but there looks to be a rise ahead ; otherwise there is very little that is different from the awful monotony of past days. Great God ! this is an awful place and terrible enough for us to have laboured to it without the reward of priority.

That day's entry ends :

Now for the run home and a desperate struggle. I wonder if we can do it.

The next day they spent in observations ; found the Norwegian hut with Amundsen's message ; built a cairn, " put up our poor slighted Union Jack," and then faced for home :

Well, we have turned our back now on the goal of our ambition and must face our 800 miles of solid dragging—and good-bye to most of the day-dreams !

That is the outline of the story so far as all know it. Cherry Garrard justly remarks that in reading Scott's published diaries we feel " the immense shove of the man " ; his mind perpetually busy with time-tables and averages, working his utmost to gain a margin

against what may happen. "So many miles to-day, so many more to-morrow. Always slog on, slog on. Always a fraction of a mile more."

But here are notes to his wife that give the other and not less characteristic side of this man—so curiously blended.

The first had been sent back by Day and Hooper, two experts of the motor party, whose special use was ended when the motors collapsed. It was written after more than three weeks of marching.

November 24th, 1911.

Lat. 81.15 S.

Just a little note from the Barrier to say that I love you. There are long hours in which to think of you and the boy. Everything is going pretty well for the present, though we had a bad scare about the condition of the ponies last week. The animals are not well selected, I knew this in New Zealand though I didn't tell you. That they are going well now and bidding fair to carry us through the first stage of the journey is entirely due to Oates. He is another treasure. Take great care of yourself—bless you. The sun shines.

C.

The next had gone back with Meares and his fellow driver Dimitri:

Beardmore Glazier
December 10th.

Just a tiny note to be taken back by the dogs. Things are not so rosy as they might be but we keep our spirits up and say the luck must turn. So far every turn shows the extraordinary good fortune that Shackleton had,[1] but you will know all this from my telegram—This is

[1] *i.e.* In the weather.

only to tell you that I find I can keep up with the rest as well as of old, and that I think of you whenever I stretch tired limbs in a very comfortable sleeping bag.

Bless you.

C.

P.S. The thought of you is *very* pleasant.

The next was carried by Atkinson's party, from the Upper Glacier depot:

December 21st, 1911.

Latitude 85 S.

We are struggling on, considering all things, against odds. The weather is a constant anxiety otherwise arrangements are working exactly as planned, but this will reach you months after you have got the public news, and so there is only the old thing to add, I love you very much and all the time.

For your own ear also, I am exceedingly fit and can go with the best of them, so that I am not ashamed to belong to you.

I write this sitting in cur tent waiting for the fog to clear—an exasperating position as we are in the worst crevassed region. Teddy Evans and Atkinson were down for the length of their harness this morning, and we have all been half way down. As first man I get first chance, and it is decidedly exciting not knowing which step will give way. Still all this is interesting enough if one could only go on.

Since writing the above I made a dash for it, got out of the valley out of the fog and away from crevasses. So here we are practically on the summit and up to date in the provision line ; we ought to get through.

But we shan't catch the ship except by a miracle, so take care of yourself and the boy. How I should love to see you.

C.

Lieutenant Evans had been entrusted with the last message, about one hundred and fifty miles from the Pole:

January 3rd, 1912.

Lat. 87.32.

A last note from a hopeful position. I think it is going to be all right. We have a fine party going forward and arrangements are all going well. So this is simply to say that I love you and that you needn't be ashamed of me, or the boy either. I have led this business—not nominally but actually—and lifted the other people out of difficulty—so that no man will or can say I wasn't fit to lead through the last lap that is before us.

I shall have to keep wondering how you are, and thinking of you constantly as I have done all along. But it will be good to see you when this business is through.

C.

P.S. Bless you, bless you.

These notes give us the inner heart of the man, who for all his frankness and geniality wore (to quote one of his early letters to her) "the reserve of a lifetime built up to protect the most sensitive spots."—It is not well that the world should think of him merely as iron will and iron sinew.

The journey back began on January 19th. There were weather troubles and on January 23rd comes the first sign of distress: "Evans a good deal run down: fingers blistered and nose congested with frequent frost-bites."

Again on the 24th:

Is the weather breaking up? If so, God help us,

with the tremendous summit journey and scant food. Wilson and Bowers are my standby. I don't like the easy way in which Oates and Evans get frost-bitten.

The allowance of food also was narrow for that tremendous labour. On January 29th : " We are certainly getting hungrier every day," is the entry. Also, Wilson strained a tendon and had to give up pulling for a day. By the time he was better, Scott had fallen and bruised a shoulder. On February 4th as they were approaching the depot, Evans fell twice and the result proved to be concussion, which completed his breakdown.

At the depot, however, they were reprovisioned, and from this onward marched with full and even ample rations.

On February 8th they were at last off the summit plateau and amongst the glaciers. Scott felt that " a lot could be written on the delight of setting foot on rock after 14 weeks of snow and ice and nearly 7 out of sight of aught else. It is like going ashore after a sea voyage." As for Wilson, he was busy geologizing and found traces of fossilized plant life.

On the 9th : " We won't rest yet, we shall pull through all right, D.V. We are by no means worn out."

It is plain that the fighting spirit was in the ascendant, and had completely shaken off whatever depression came from the shock of disappointment.

But it was a losing fight. A wrong decision taken among crevasses led them into " the worst ice mess I have ever been in." They were twelve hours on the march before they won through. It should be borne in mind that Scott's tactics of dealing with glaciers had succeeded when he had an active following ; now he had at least one invalid—Evans—in his team, and must try to avoid stiff ascents. The next two days were

overshadowed by danger ; they were uncertain of finding the depot and food had run out. It was found, and they had full supply to carry them to the next, if they could march. But it became plain that Evans could not, and that even his brain was affected by the consequences of his fall. Mercifully, he died on the night of February 17th. They were then within easy march of the Lower Glacier depot and the supplies of horsemeat.

Two stages of the journey were past, the plateau and the Glacier, but the last and longest, of 420 miles on the Barrier, lay before them and the surface proved very bad. On February 24th Scott wrote: "It is great luck having the horsemeat to add to our ration. It is a race between the season and hard conditions and our fitness and good food."

By March 2nd they had reached the Middle Barrier Depot and were re-provisioned with food, but found a shortage of oil fuel, due to some unexplained leakage. It would appear that in such a temperature paraffin "creeps," and works its way upwards through close fastenings. Nature's enmity to life in those solitudes had unforeseen weapons. Scott had provided for food, but food alone could not maintain their vitality ; and the next depot was 71 miles away. Marches had fallen to a bare average of ten miles. There could be no confidence in their fitness : Oates showed his feet, very badly frost-bitten. Cold increased to 40 degrees to zero and the surface worsened.

God help us, we can't keep up this pulling that is certain. Amongst ourselves we are unendingly cheerful but what each man feels in his heart I can only guess. Putting on footgear in the morning is getting slower and slower, therefore every day more dangerous.

By the 6th Oates had ceased to be able to pull and the

effort to get his marching gear on delayed them by hours every day.

They struggled on together, the sick man and the three spent men, for ten mortal days; and on March 17th Oates took the decision which the world knows of, and walked out into the blizzard to die.

Next day Scott's right foot had gone; the toes perishing from frost-bite before he was aware:

Amputation is the least I can hope for now, but will the trouble spread!

On the 19th they had got to within 11 miles of their depot, One Ton Camp, when a blizzard came on them and they lay up for a day. Fuel was exhausted and on the 21st it was settled that Wilson and Bowers should march on a forlorn hope to bring back oil. But the blizzard continued.

It continued for eleven days.

On the 20th they had fuel to make two cups of tea apiece and bare food for two days. Yet Scott was able to write on the 29th, and apparently all were then still alive. The last words in his diary are:

Every day we have been ready to start for our depot *11 miles* away, but outside the door of the tent it remains a scene of whirling drift. I do not think we can hope for any better things now. We shall stick it out to the end, but we are getting weaker, of course, and the end cannot be far.

It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write more.

R. Scott.

Last entry:

For God's sake look after our people.

Their fate was for long unguessed at home; the "Terra Nova," sailing in March 1912, carried in her

Lieutenant Evans who had seen them marching strongly forward, at a date which rendered it impossible that they should be back before March was out—but in a position that made it almost certain they would reach the Pole, with every hope of safe return.

But the remnant of the expedition at Cape Evans knew from April onwards that they must be dead ; though in the polar winter search was impossible.

For eight months the three lay in their tent and then in November, the Antarctic spring, searchers found them. Cherry Garrard writes of what he saw—and what he felt:

Bowers and Wilson were sleeping in their bags. Scott had thrown back the flaps of his bag at the head. His left hand was stretched over Wilson, his lifelong friend. Beneath the head of his bag, between the bag and the floor cloth, was the green wallet in which he carried his diary. The brown books of diary were inside and on the floor cloth were some letters.

Everything was tidy. The tent had been pitched as well as ever, taut and shipshape. There was no snow inside the inner lining. There were some loose pannikins from the cooker, and a few more letters and records —personal and scientific. Near Scott was a lamp formed from a tin and some lamp wick off a finnesko. It had been used to burn the little methylated spirit which remained. I think that Scott had used it to help him to write up to the end. I feel sure that he had died last—and once I had thought he would not go so far as some of the others. We never realized how strong that man was, mentally and physically, until now.

That is the picture. The team as a team had sacrificed their chances to waiting, first on one stricken comrade, then on another ; as a team they had per-

severed in carrying out their appointed purpose, for nothing that they had accomplished was wasted ; all their records were faithfully preserved ; even the geological specimens, two stone weight of them, more than the ordinary man cares to carry, had been dragged all along their weary marches from the Beardmore Glacier. Then at the end, the team as a team, rejecting the alternative of death by opium, for which they were provided, quietly lay down to take what came. But the leader's work was not done while life remained in him. On him rested the whole responsibility, and he felt that his power to affect events would not be ended by death. He counted with certainty that search would find them ; the written word therefore remained ; and there were duties to be done with the last flicker of his strength, while the cold gnawed at his fingers.

First came the duties of tenderness, incumbent on him as leader ; his letters to Mrs. Wilson his friend's wife, and to Mrs. Bowers, mother of that "gallant noble gentleman," are as tender as ever were written ; and the world has seen them.[1]

There was a more imperious duty—to make good, so far as in him lay, the loss which was inflicted on others. He wrote to Sir James Barrie, he wrote to Sir Joseph Kinsey, the expedition's best friend in New Zealand, urging upon them the care of his wife and child and of the other two widows whom the expedition made. These were men that he could count on, if the country failed him. But he made his appeal above all to the country direct :

For four days we have been unable to leave the tent —the gale howling about us. We are weak, writing is difficult, but for my own sake I do not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure

[1] *Scott's Last Journey.*

hardships, help one another, and meet death with as great a fortitude as ever in the past. We took risks, we knew we took them ; things have come out against us, and therefore we have no cause for complaint, but bow to the will of Providence, determined still to do our best to the last. But if we have been willing to give our lives to this enterprise, which is for the honour of our country, I appeal to our countrymen to see that those who depend on us are properly cared for.

Had we lived, I should have had a tale to tell of the hardihood, endurance, and courage of my companions which would have stirred the heart of every Englishman. These rough notes and our dead bodies must tell the tale, but surely, surely, a great rich country like ours will see that those who are dependent on us are properly provided for.

R. Scott.

Nothing in all the record of this man's life is more wonderful than that letter written on the brink of death from cold and starvation. The whole force of his vitality is in it ; the words strike home, quivering like arrows from a strong bow. Nor were they uttered in vain. England heard and knew that there was a man speaking. Not a word in the public letter, not a word in all the tenderest of what he wrote privately, breathes of regret for himself, and for those whom he had led to this end. He had taken risks, judging them worth taking, judging them worth so much that he could invite others to share them ; and when the risk fell against him, his mind did not waver ; it was still worth while that men should have taken such a risk. He wrote to his old chief, Admiral Bridgeman :

After all we are setting a good example to our countrymen, if not by getting into a tight place, by facing it

like men when we were there. We could have come through had we neglected the sick.

This temper stirred England, as no appeal for compassion could have done, and England is not generous by halves. Provision was made beyond the limits of mere sufficiency for all who were left; and to his widow was given the right to use the title which would have been hers had he returned and been made a Knight of the Order of the Bath. Yet far more striking it was, for those who had the chance, to observe how the general public paid Lady Scott and her child the tribute of a watchful affection. It was so even during the war, when wild tales of daring, and pitiful examples of bereavement, were as common as daily bread.

A different mood, less challenging, and yet not less courageous, is shown in the last of Scott's letters which is to be given in this book[1]:

To my Widow,

We are in a very tight corner and have doubts of pulling through—In our short lunch hours I take advantage of a very small measure of warmth to write letters preparatory to a possible end—The first is naturally to you on whom my thoughts mostly dwell waking or sleeping.

If anything happens to me I should like you to know how much you have meant to me, what pleasant recollections are with me as I depart.

I should like you to take what comfort you can from these facts also. I shall not have suffered any pain, but leave the world fresh from harness and full of good health and vigour. This is decided already. When provisions come to an end we simply stop unless we are

[1] An extract from this letter appeared in *Scott's Last Journey*.

within easy distance of another depot. Therefore you must not imagine a great tragedy. We are very anxious of course and have been for weeks, but our splendid physical condition and our appetites compensate for all discomforts. The cold is trying and sometimes angering, but here again the hot food which drives it forth is so wonderfully enjoyable that one would scarcely be without it.

We have gone downhill a good bit since I wrote the above. Poor Titus Oates has gone—he was in a bad state. The rest of us keep going and imagine we have a chance to get through, but the cold weather doesn't let up at all. We are 20 miles from a depot but we have very little food and fuel.

I want you to take the whole thing very sensibly as I am sure you will. The boy will be your comfort. I had looked forward to helping you to bring him up, but it is a satisfaction to know that he will be safe with you. I think both he and you ought to be specially looked after by the country, for which after all we have given our lives with something of spirit which makes for example. I am writing letters on this point in the end of this book. Will you send them to their various destinations?

I must write a little letter for the boy if time can be found, to be read when he grows up. The inherited vice from my side of the family is indolence—above all he must guard, and you must guard him, against that. I had to force myself into being strenuous as you know —had always an inclination to be idle. My father was idle and it brought much trouble.

You know I cherish no sentimental rubbish about re-marriage. When the right man comes to help you in life you ought to be your happy self again—I wasn't a very good husband, but I hope I shall be a good memory. Certainly the end is nothing for you to be

ashamed of, and I like to think that the boy will have a good start in his parentage of which he may be proud.

It isn't easy to write because of the cold—40 below zero and nothing but the shelter of our tents. You must know that quite the worst aspect of this situation is the thought that I shall not see you again. The inevitable must be faced, you urged me to be leader of this party, and I know you felt it would be dangerous. I have taken my place throughout, haven't I ?

God bless you. I shall try and write more later—I go on across the back pages.

Since writing the above, we got within 11 miles of our depot with one hot meal and two days' cold food. We should have got through but have been held for four days by a frightful storm. I think the last chance has gone. We have decided not to kill ourselves but to fight to the last for that depot, but in fighting there is a painless end, so don't worry. I have written letters on odd pages of this book. Will you manage to get them sent. You see I am anxious for you and the boy's future. Make the boy interested in natural history if you can. It is better than games. They encourage it at some schools. I know you will keep him in the open air. Try and make him believe in a God, it is comforting——

There is a piece of the Union Jack I put up at the South Pole in my private kit-bag, together with Amundsen's black flag and other trifles. Send a small piece of the Union Jack to the King, a small piece to Queen Alexandra, and keep the rest, a poor trophy for you—What lots and lots I could tell you of this journey. How much better has it been than lounging in too great comfort at home. What tales you would have for the boy, but oh what a price to pay—Dear, you will be good to the old mother. I write her a little line in this book,

also keep in with Etty and the others. Oh but you 'll put a bold strong face to the world, only don't be too proud to accept help for the boy's sake. He ought to have a fine career and do something in the world. I haven't time to write to Sir Clements, tell him I thought much of him, and never regretted his putting me in command of the "Discovery." Give kindest messages and farewell to Lady Baxter and Lady Sandhurst. Keep friends with them for both are dear women, so also with the Reginald Smiths.

There was a special note written among these last to the friends whose names come at the end of that last letter. It is now printed for the first time:

To Reginald Smith, K.C., and Mrs. Smith.
A word of farewell to the kindest people I have known —God bless you both.
The luck is against us.

R. Scott
March 1912.

After that comes his message to the one who for so long was first in his devotion, and who was never second in his tenderness:

My own darling Mother,

The Great God has called me, and I feel that the news of it will add a fearful blow to the heavy ones that have fallen on you in life. But take comfort in that I die at peace with the world, and I myself not afraid—not perhaps believing in all that you hold to so splendidly, but still believing that there is a God—a merciful God. I wish I could remember that I had been a better son to you, but I think you will know

that you were always very much in my heart and that I strove to put you into more comfortable circumstances.

I join dear old Arch, both of us having given the life you gave us, to our country. The country owes you the debt—Willy will look after you, but you will have the small sum of money I was able to save, and Willy will buy an annuity.[1]

I hope so that you remain in your——

It ends so ; and then there is this other farewell :

My dear, dear Mother

I wish you could have been spared this blow and indeed it has been most supremely unfortunate, for the risks I have taken never seemed excessive.

For myself I am not unhappy, but for Kathleen, you and the rest of the family my heart is very sore.

Still, I hope for all that I leave a memory to be proud of—we have done a very big journey and failed only by a very narrow margin.

God bless you, dear—I die feeling that your material comfort will be looked after to the end. I wish I had been a greater comfort to you.

Your loving son

Con.

These intimate letters, speaking as they do of a man in friendship, in kinship, and in wedlock greatly beloved and greatly loving, admit no comment. But a word or two has yet to be said about the public figure—the explorer, the writer, the leader of men.

Contrasts have been drawn, inevitably.

Two men, within a month of each other, led a small

[1] It had been agreed between him and his wife that his whole personal fortune, the small savings of ten years, should go to his mother if she outlived him.

company of hardy followers to the central point of the frozen continent. One not only reached the goal first but brought back his comrades alive and well. The praise of Amundsen's journey has been spoken justly by Scott's special champion, Sir Clements Markham :

" It was a miracle of forethought and organization, the success of which was aided by remarkably favourable weather and no doubt also by the fact that the explorers were all practised ski-runners."

He might have added that the expedition relied for its transport on dog teams, in the handling of which Amundsen and his men were as much superior to Scott and his naval comrades as Scott and they would have been to Amundsen's party in managing a torpedo boat. But enough has been said already of the reasons why Scott avoided this form of transport—which was undoubtedly, for those who could use it, the best for polar travel at the time he made his journey. It may well be, as Sir Douglas Mawson has written in a private letter, that he was " over-considerate of the dogs." It has been seen also that he attached an ideal value to the idea of achieving the exploit by sheer man-power ; and what he and his comrades accomplished stands as a marvel of human strength and endurance.

But nothing can be clearer than that all Scott's instincts and training prompted him to use the latest devices of mechanical invention to forward his object ; and if he were alive to-day, he would assuredly look upon mechanical flight as the essential means for such exploration as he attempted by primitive methods. The end would still be the same as that for which he with his four companions gave their lives, " the quest of knowledge in the utmost parts of the earth "—so his comrade Dr. Simpson has defined it. The end would not be

followed in the same way ; the risks to be taken would be widely different—and how great those risks are, the fate which has set a final seal on Amundsen's fame stands for a proof. But in essence, the principle would be the same. No enterprise would have been avoided because it carried risks. Hazards within the bounds of reason, Scott held richly worth taking.—We are forced to ask, Should he be condemned for misjudging the chances ? since manifestly it would have been inexcusable to push on without a fair chance of safe return.

It is plain from the accounts given in print that neither the party which turned back under Atkinson on the Beardmore Glacier, nor that which returned under Evans from the polar plateau itself, felt any serious apprehension as to Scott's ability to come through. Yet he failed.

Reasons have been given. Sir Douglas Mawson, speaking with all authority possible, holds that the fatal defect was age ; that Scott at thirty, leading men of twenty, would not have succumbed. Youth has greater elasticity, more power of recovery ; and in the judgment of this man, tried to the utmost in sledge hauling, the strain of that tremendous labour tends to wear out the heart, and doubly so at such an altitude as that of the plateau, nine thousand feet above sea level. The result is weakened circulation, and increased liability to frost-bite. Bowers only of the five who reached the Pole was under thirty.

Still, the fact is that they got within eleven miles of One Ton Camp, where was plenty of provision, within only 170 miles of their base ; and here they were held up by an unseasonable blizzard which lasted at least ten days. This was a thing beyond all Scott's experience —and in the judgment of Dr. Simpson, now Director of the Meteorological Office, who accompanied the expedition as physicist, Scott's failure was due to ex-

ceptional ill-fortune with weather. In his Halley Lecture, delivered in May 1923, Dr. Simpson laid it down that the polar journey was unforeseeably delayed on the way out by the blizzard which stopped the ponies four days only one march from the Glacier. This delay was made up ; Scott brought his march table up to his pre-arranged date ; but with the same exertion and better luck he would have saved four days on it. Finally, Dr. Simpson holds that in returning Scott was encountered on the Barrier by wholly exceptional cold, and a blizzard of quite abnormal duration. These possibilities were within the margin of risk ; but the meteorologist's finding is, briefly, that the chances of the weather ran against the party to a degree that could not have been anticipated.

Yet when all is said, the truth of this matter seems to lie rather with Mr. Griffith Taylor, who says that the party was lost when Evans met his injury on the Glacier. The absolute certainty of doom for them all was removed by his mercifully quick death ; but the moral effect of the days in which they saw him trail beside them must have been terrible. As it was, instead of the priceless tonic of achievement, their coming to the Pole had brought nothing but the depression of disappointment ; and now they had this also to face. It was bad for the others ; but for Scott as leader it meant a dreadful choice. He must have faced for many hours the responsibility of sacrificing all to one, and without hope of saving that one.

Yet in principle the issue was foreseen. Griffith Taylor tells how he had put to Wilson the question, what should be done if one of an exploring party broke his leg? "Pitch camp," said Wilson, "kill plenty of seals and wait till you are relieved or till the leg has healed enough to march." The possibility of abandoning a comrade was definitely ruled out ; the implications of

that advice were plain ; and they held firm even in the wastes where no source of food was available.

When Oates in his turn failed on the return journey, the fate of all was settled. Scott wrote in his already published letter of farewell to Admiral Bridgeman : "We could have come through had we neglected the sick."

In that lies the answer to the one charge that can be brought against Scott with some plausibility : the charge of wasting valuable lives. He led men in an enterprise of which there are many records ; and throughout all these records, one principle stands out, unwritten, unexpressed, yet everywhere manifest as the underlying law—that men must stand by each other in distress, even beyond the bounds of reason. That is the essential condition that must bind all dangerous enterprise. Unless every participant is confident from the outset that every other one will hold the rule dearer than life, the enterprise is doomed to disaster and disgrace.

As Scott himself said in the letter to Admiral Bridgeman, they were setting a good example to their countrymen.

Two years after his death, there was need indeed of brave men ; and in a sense the expense then seemed wasteful to look back upon. Yet who can say what it was worth to a courageous but unmilitary people, suddenly called upon to arm in millions by land and sea, that such an example should have been driven home as this was to the very heart of the race ? In the first period of the War, while service was still voluntary, scores of letters came to Scott's widow from unknown soldiers, saying that they could never have faced without complaint the dangers and hardships of their service had they not learned to do so from his teaching. Scott's worth to his country lay not only in his power to do and to lead ; it was even more in his power to express, convey and trans-

mit the spirit which prompted men to high adventure and nerved them to face whatever might come of it, in a great cause.

No attempt shall be made to sum the man up. As Admiral Skelton, Scott's comrade in the service and comrade in his first Antarctic journey, has written in a private letter :

" Anything that anybody could write to explain Scott's greatness would be poor stuff after what he has written himself on his last journey—And I am not sure I like the word ' greatness '—He was better than that. Otherwise you would not have had Wilson following him a second time."

There we touch the truth. Of the three men who were found lying in their tent on the Barrier, long months after death froze them, each had amply proved fitness to be a leader ; yet among them there was no question where leadership lay. It is clear, too, that even when the end was plain in view, Wilson and Bowers never doubted that Scott's leadership had justified itself. Leader and comrades, they had done their duty superbly by each other and by the adventure : more than that, they had given proof of their faith that outside the common routine of duty lie fields of unchartered endeavour, in which high service may be valiantly rendered, high honour nobly pursued, and high sacrifice heroically accepted.

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